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THE INFERNO

OF

DANTE ALIGHIERI,

TRANSLATED IN

THE TERZA RIMA OF THE ORIGINAL,

WITH NOTES AND APPENDIX,

BY JOHN DAYMAN, M.A.,

RECTOR OF SHELTON, CUMBERLAND, AND LATE FELLOW OF CORPUS
CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD.

"Ibant obscuri sola sub nocte per umbram,
Perque domos Ditis vacuas, et inania regna"

ÆNEID. VI.

LONDON:

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PREFACE.

It was intended to have prefaced the translation of Dante's "Inferno," which is here offered to the public, by some remarks on metrical structure, as subservient to the principal object of the Poet. Such observations would not have been unsuited to this *first* attempt (as far as I am aware) to present Dante to the English reader in the Terza Rima of his own choice; and to me they appeared almost necessary in self-justification, with a version so faithful and spirited, as I am told Mr. Cary's is, already in possession of the field.

But as those arguments would have added greatly to the length of the prefatory notice, they have been withheld, at the suggestion of friends; who have also induced me to suppress, for the same reason, a few criticisms on Dante's great poem,

viewed as indicating the character of the times in which he lived.

Nothing, therefore, remains but to enumerate, as concisely as possible, the authorities which have been followed in determining and illustrating the text. These are :—

I. The elaborate edition by Lombardi, published at Rome between the years 1791-1817 ; which would have been even more perfect than it is, if the learned editor had not betrayed an extravagant partiality for the Nidobeatine edition of 1478.

II. The edition by Antonio Buttura, published at Paris in 1823 ; which ordinarily, but not servilely, follows Lombardi.

III. Sansovino's edition, with the commentaries of Landino and Vellutello, printed at Venice by the Brothers Sessa in 1596, and profusely illustrated with wood-cuts. This curious old book has been consulted principally for the historical notices.

Besides these, occasional reference has been made (as the Notes will show) to the Parisian edition of Professor Biagioli, and,

more rarely, to that of the prejudiced Venturi.

By inspection of the *Rimario* appended to Lombardi's edition, it will be found that Dante has allowed himself, on more than one occasion, to use the same rhyme twice in the same Canto, and this license has been taken, though sparingly, in the following version.

In justice to myself, no less than others, I have rigidly abstained from making any acquaintance with the English translations which have preceded this ; and hence the candid reader will refer whatever coincidences he may discover to our common original.

The peculiarities of Dante's genius are too well known to make an excuse necessary here for the obscurity of occasional passages, which could hardly have been avoided, even by the unsatisfactory endeavour after a paraphrase, rather than a literal translation.

More than one account of Dante's life and fortunes having lately appeared in our

language, it will be sufficient to mention here, that the great Father of Modern Poetry was born at Florence, A.D. 1265, condemned to fine and banishment in January, A.D. 1302, and died at Ravenna September 14, A.D. 1321.

Skelton, June 1st, 1843.

THE INFERNO.

CANTO I.

ARGUMENT.—*Dante finds himself astray in a wood—Apparition of certain wild beasts—The shade of the poet Virgil presents itself, and invites Dante to follow.*

¹MIDWAY the journey of our life along,
I found me in a gloomy woodland dell,
The right road all confounded with the wrong.
Ay me ! how hard a thing it were to tell
How rough and stern and savage showed the
wood,
Which, yet remembered, yet is terrible !
Hardly were death more bitter. But the good
Which I therein discovered to unfold
Aright, will I of other things prelude
Encountered there. Yet ill by me were told
How first I entered, so entombed in sleep
My senses lay, what hour I ceased to hold

The way of truth : ²till pausing 'neath a steep,
The barrier of that melancholy glen
Whose horrors made my quivering flesh to
creep,

His beamy shoulders to mine upward ken
Displayed the clothing of that planet sphere
Which surely guides the feet of other men,
Whate'er their track. Now calmer lay the fear
Which froze my ponded heart's blood round
the core,

That livelong night of agony so drear ;
And like to him that, struggling late for shore
With gasped breath, now on the perilous surge
Turneth him round, and fixedly doth pore,
So turned my soul, though terror-spurred to
urge

Her onward flight, and viewed ³the dark defile
Which left none living in its fatal gurge.
My weary frame reposed, that mountain pile,
Again a lonesome wayfarer, I trode,
My lower foot my firmer eye the while.
And lo ! or e'er the steep-ascending road
Began, ⁴a Panther, light and wondrous fleet,
In radiant coat of many colours glowed ;
And ever must mine eyes her image greet,
Hindering my farther way, that many a time
I turned with purpose of a swift retreat.

⁵It was the blessed hour of morning prime ;
The sun went up through heaven, and on his
wings
Hung every star that sang the Love sublime
Which gave to motion all those beauteous things.
The Panther, in her gay apparel dight,
Prompted my heart with hope's imaginings—
The hour, the day, the season of delight,
Inspired no less ; yet every hope was weak
To quell the dread which shook me from a
sight
Of ravening Lion, bent on me to wreak,
With head up-tossed, his hunger-whetted ire—
For fear of him the very air did quake.
There too a Wolf, with covetous desire
Seeming o'ercharged in her gaunt meagreness,
And manyhath she to miser-life brought nigher.
On my lorn spirit so heavily did press
Her hideous vision—strivings all were vain,
My hope to win that height grew ever less.
And e'en as he that gladly maketh gain,
Happening on losses in his fatal hour,
From every thought draws wretchedness and
pain,
So me the beast confronting to devour
Drove, step by step, with unrelenting course,
Down where the silent sun no more hath power.

While ruining to lowest place perforce

I sank, before mine eyes a shape was shown,
Who ⁶seemed with very length of silence hoarse.

Him when I spied in that vast desert lone,

I shrieked aloud, "Have mercy on me, thou—
Be thou or bodiless shade, or flesh and bone."

Who answered, "Man I was, man am not now;

Of ⁷Lombardy my parents both; and they
Did Mantua for their native home avow.

Sub Julio was I born, though late of day,

And under good Augustus lived in Rome,
What time the false and lying gods held sway.

I was a poet; and that just one's doom

I sang, Anchises' son, who came from Troy,
When fiery wrath did Ilion's pride consume.

But wherefore turnest thou to such annoy?

Why climb'st thou not the mount delectable,
The original and cause of every joy?"

"And thou art Virgil's self, the living well,
Whence flowed of parle so liberal the tide?"

I answered, while my shame-struck visage fell—

"O thou, of bards the lustre and the pride,

Now speed me love, and faithfulness of heart,
Which to the volume of thy book applied

Me duteous. Thou my chief, my master, art,

Thou the sole archetype from whence I learned

⁸Whate'er my charms of style that fame impart.

See, see the bestial shape, whereat I turned !
She thrills my pulses, thicks my blood with cold—
Help, Master, by thy praise of wisdom earned.”
“ Meeter for thee a different path to hold,”
Replied the sage, my tearful cheeks surveying,
“ Wouldst thou deliverance from yon savage
wold:

For the fell beast who late, thy steps waylaying,
Caused thee to shriek, lets none a passage find
Across her walk, but hindereth e'en to slaying.
Baleful she is, and of so curst a kind,
Her ravenous maw no glut can satisfy,
But eats and leaves a hungrier greed behind.
Many the brutes wherewith she does ally,
And shall be more; until ⁹the good greyhound,
For this appointed, plague her that she die.
His food shall be nor pewter, nor the ground,
But wisdom, love, and virtue; and his birth
Ordained where ¹⁰either Feltro sets a bound;
The saviour of that ¹¹low Italian earth
For which young Turnus, chaste Camilla bled,
And Nisus and the compeer of his worth.
Then shall from town to town the chase be sped,
Till, hunted home, she to the abyss descend,
Whence erewhile Envy bade her lift the head.
Now for thy weal I counsel and perpend
Thou follow hence where I shall lead thee on
Through realm eternal, whither if thou wend,

Thine ear shall hear the shrieks of hope foregone,
Thine eye shall see the souls of eld in woe,
That ever call the second death upon :
Shall other see content to undergo
The penal flame, because they hope to rest
In happier seats, though none their hour may
know.

Wherein if thou, with higher aim possessest,
Seek entrance, I must quit thee and resign
My charge to ¹²spirit worthier and more blest.
Who reigns above in Empery Divine,
For that I lived rebellious to His word,
Wills none to enter there with aid of mine.
There is HE King, that everywhere is Lord,
There stands His city, there His throne of state,
Blest whom His choice doth mansion there accord !”

And I to him : “ Poet, I supplicate,
By His great name, the God thou knewest not,
So might I shun both this and worser fate,
E’en as thou saidst, O bring me to the spot
Whence I may see ¹³Saint Peter’s gate, and
theirs
That ever wail their miserable lot.”
I said, and follow close, while on he fares.

CANTO II.

ARGUMENT.—*Invocation of the Author's genius
—Dante suggests a doubt, which is resolved by
Virgil giving account of the commission he had
received from Beatrice ; and the two poets ad-
vance on their journey.*

THE day went down, and all that earth inherit
And breathe the breath of life, the dusky air
Delivered from their toils. I gird my spirit,
In wakeful loneliness, the strife to bear,
Which part my wanderings, part my pity
brought,
The which unerring memory shall declare.
Now help me, Muses ! help, energetic thought !
Now, memory, scribe of all that smote mine
eyes.
Be patent here thy nobleness unbought.
“Bard,” I began, “who dost my steps advise,
Look well, my virtue's potency avail,
Ere thou commit me to the great emprise.

The mighty ¹sire of Silvius (thine the tale)
Yet corruptible, did of immortal being
In sensible coherence pass the pale.
But what if the Enemy of ill, foreseeing
His lofty sequent glories, did him grace?
The effect, the form, the substance all agreeing
Who understandeth deems him not too base.
He in empyrean heaven was chosen sire
Of nursing Rome, and her imperial place;
And, sooth to say, ²that Rome and her empire
Built deep foundations for the hallowed ground,
Where Peter's legate wears the triple tire.
Him that adventure, which thy vaunts resound,
Gave weightier things to know, whose late event
His conquest and the Papal mantle crowned.
Thither the ³Vessel of election bent
His steps for comfort to that faith divine,
Of saving life the spring and instrument.
But I—to enter there what plea were mine?
I nor Æneas am, nor holy Paul;
Nor I, nor other for me claims such sign.
If, then, I came abandoned to thy thrall,
’Twere peril of my foolishness. But thou
Art wise—thy better thoughts my thoughts fore-
stal.”
As one that what he wished unwisheth now,
And, changing purpose in a newer drift,
Doth his first motion wholly disallow;

So wrought I then beneath that gloomy clift,
Who, meditating, quenched the venturous
hope
That in her first beginning rose so swift.
“If of thy words I rightly read the scope,
Thy stumbling soul,” replied that hero-
ghost,
“With its own cowardice is loth to cope.
Man oftentime she, cumbering to his cost,
Turns recreant from each generous aim away,
Like startled beast by mocking shadow crost.
To re-assure thee from this base dismay,
Mine errand, and what after-things portended
I learnt when pity touched me, will I say.
I was among their host that wait ⁴suspended—
⁵A lady called me, blest and beautiful ;
To her commands a willing ear I bended :
To match her eyes the brightest star were dull,
And with angelic voice she thus began,
Sweetening her accents in a lowly lull :
‘O Spirit of the courteous Mantuan,
Whose fame yet walks the world, and shall
advance
Coëval with her motion’s utmost span—
A friend, beloved of me, but not of Chance,
On the wild mountain from his path is driven
By very fear—such his thwart hinderance :

And I, for his amazement sore misgiven,
Doubt lest my succouring haste prove all too
late,

So bore the tidings heard of him in heaven.
Go, then, and with thine eloquence ornate,
And all that else he shall for rescue need,
In aiding him cheer me disconsolate.

Beatrice am I, thine embassy that speed ;
The place I left I thirst again to see ;
Love caused my coming, Love commands me
plead.

When I in presence of my Lord shall be,
Thine oft-remembered praise shall greet his
ears.'

Thus ending silent, I rejoined, ' On me,
O Queen of Virtue, in whose right appears
The human kind of every creature best,
That heaven hath girded in sublunar spheres,
So welcome falls thy bidding and behest,
Mine instant service lags behind my will,
Nor farther needs thy meaning be exprest.
But tell me why thou reckest not of ill
To plunge thee downward in this nether wheel,
From the broad bosom of thy wished-for hill ?'
' Briefly,' the dame replied, ' will I reveal,
Since thou so inward things art fain to know,
Why for mine entering here no dread I feel :

Whate'er hath power to work another's woe
Is only terrible, nor may too much
Be shunned ; nought else, none other fear we
owe.

I am, through God his grace, created such
Of quality, that nor the flame can harm
Of this dire furnace, nor your misery touch.
There is ⁶a maid in heaven, whose gentle charm,
Mourning the impediment whereof I send
Thee vanquisher, hath crippled the stern arm
Of judgment. She called Lucia to befriend
Her suit, and thus: 'The faithful one, thine
own,

Hath need of thee, whom I to thee commend.'
Lucia, the foe of every tyrant known,
Came where I sat with her of ancient days,
The pensive Rachel, communing alone.
'Beatrice,' she said, 'of God the very praise,
How comes thou aid not him who loved so well,
Whom from the vulgar herd thy love did raise?
Canst thou not hear what shrieks his anguish
tell?

Not see the death he combats, on a tide
That yields no vantage to the ocean-swell?
Never on earth have mortals faster hied
To make their profit, and their loss to shun,
Than downward I from seat beatified

Sped me, when as the unwelcome word was done ;
Trusting thine honest style, that glory erst
To thee, and since to them that heard thee,
won.'

Thus ending parley, with a gracious burst
Of tears, on me her glistening eyes she threw,
And warmed to quicker speed the zeal that first
Moved me ; till, even as she willed, I flew
To yon fair mount, and thee from brute assault,
That barred thy shorter path, in safety drew.
What wilt thou, then ?—and wherefore, wherefore
halt ?

Wherefore the craven flattery at thy heart ?
Wherefore of freeborn ardour this default,
While to the female sainted three thou art
Their dear concernment in the courts of light,
And promise of such good my words impart ?”

Even as flowerets, by the chill of night
Low bent and folded, i' the sun's blanching
beam

Lift them, all opened, on their stalk upright,
So I my fainting energy redeem—
So gushed the tide of courage through my veins,
And such my word, as brave man might beseem.
“ O pitiful the fair that helped my pains !
And courteous thou, whose spirit, swift obeying,
The impress of her truthful speech retains.

Thine own persuasive words, my heart o'erswaying,
Have to such longings waked her from her
sloth,

That I reclaim me to my former saying.
Go, then ; the will is one to lead us both,
My Guide, my Lord, my Master !" As I
spake,

He moved his onward step, and, nothing loth,
I entered in that deep and tangled brake.

CANTO III.

ARGUMENT.—*Inscription over the gate of Hell*
—*Punishment of the Slothful—Arrival of the*
Travellers on the bank of Acheron, and their
interview with Charon.

“THROUGH me the path to city named of Wail;
Through me the path to woe without remove;
Through me the path to damned souls in bale!
Justice inclined my Maker from above;
I am by virtue of the ¹ Might Divine,
The Sùpreme Wisdom, and the Primal Love.
Created birth none antedates to mine,
Save ² endless things, and endless I endure:
Ye that are entering—all hope resign.”
These words charàctered all in hues obscure
Over a portal’s arch I traced, and said,
“Too stern their legend, master, to allure.”
And he to me, like teacher well-read,
“Behoves thee here renounce each vain suspect,
Each coward thought here number with the
dead;

This is the place wherein I told thee wrecked
Thou must behold the joyless souls, ungraced
By Him, the chiefest good of intellect."
Thus ending, while his hand with mine embraced,
Me, gathering comfort from his cheerful guise,
Within that world of secret things he placed.
Sighs there, and moaning sobs, and shriller cries
Rebounded echoing through the starless air,
And early forced the tear-gush from mine eyes:
Tongues of all strain, dread language of despair,
Words born of anguish, accents choked with ire,
And voices loud and hoarse were mingling
there

With sound of hands, to swell one uproar dire
That aye went eddying round that timeless
gloom,
As the sand eddieth in the whirlwind's gyre.
"Master, what would this din?" asked I, to whom
Error had blindfold bound the head: "Say, who
The tribe that thus lie vanquished by their
doom?"

And he to me—"The miserable crew
Of souls now lingers in this piteous mood,
To whom, alive, nor blame nor praise was
due.

Commingled are they with ³that caitiff brood
Of angel natures, which nor dared rebel,
Nor yet kept faith, but selfish ends pursued

Them, not to be less fair, must heaven expel,
Nor the abyss receive, lest their dispraise
Redound 'for glory to the sons of hell."
And I—"Good master, what the grief that weighs
On them, to cause the exceeding bitter cry?"
"Brief answer best," he said, "their state con-
veys.

These are forbidden e'en the hope to die ;
So unregarded is their life and base,
All other fates they view with envious eye.
For their report existence hath no place ;
Justice and mercy laugh them both to scorn :
—Talk we no more of them, but look and pass."
And I beheld, and lo ! a pennon borne
In reckless whirl careering ; seemed, it found
No spot so vile, whereon it might sojourn.
And, lengthening after, such ⁵ the rout went round
Of souls, I hardly might my thought persuade
That half their number death had ever bound.
There 'mid remembered faces I the shade
Of that ⁶ apostate saw, and took record,
Who to his own high right turned renegade :
Incontinent I knew them, well assured
The miscreant palterers they, nor hot nor cold,
Of God and of his enemies abhorred.
They, most misfortuned, ⁷ who did ne'er behold
True life, were naked all, and sorely stung
Of wasps and hornets, native there of old.

These ever on their cheeks big blood-gouts hung,
That mixed with tears went trickling to their
feet,

Licked up of loathly worms which round them
clung.

Shuddering I strain mine onward gaze, and meet
Figures that lined a mighty river's flow,

Then said, "The boon, dear master, I entreat,
Their quality and custom'd use to know,
Wherefore so forward these to cross the tide
As through the glimmering light their gestures
show."

"The riddle shall be read," my chief replied,
"And all unveiled, when as our steps we stay
On melancholy Acheron's dark side."

I heard abashed, and trembling lest my say
Irk'd him, with downcast eyes that told my
shame,

From speech withdrew me, till we made our way
Far as the stream : when lo ! to meet us came

^aAn ancient boatman, hoar with many a year,
Crying, "Woe to you, souls of evil name !

Ne'er hope to see the bright celestial sphere :

I come to waft you to another shore,

Where, cold or heat, still endless night is near.

And thou there, soul whose day is not yet o'er,

Come from those dead forth, and be separate."

But when he saw me parted none the more,

"Through other roads," he said, "by other freight
Must be thy landing, not by this way, prest :
Far lighter bark were mated with thy weight."
And thus my guide—"Rest, angry Charon, rest :
So is it willed to be, where might and will
Go hand in hand, and brook no farther quest,"
He ended, and those grisly cheeks were still
Of him, the pilot of the livid lake,
Whose eyeballs' orbit fiery wheels did fill.
But when they caught the ruthless words he spake,
Those weary naked sprites, the bank who lined,
Changed colour, and with gnashing teeth out-
brake :
God they blasphemed, their parents and their
kind,
The place, the time, the seed prolific,
That embryo sowed them, and to life consigned.
Then wailing loud, their troop they gathered all,
And back recoiled them to the baleful verge,
Ordained to men from godliness who fall.
Oft Charon's demon eyes that muster urge,
Live coals, with beckoning gleam, and oft he
wields
His oar, of every laggard wight the scourge,
As lightly to the touch of Autumn yields
A leaf, and soon another; few, then fewer
Cling to their branch, whose plunder loads the
fields,

So one by one did Adam's seed impure
From that high bank obedient cast them down,
At signal made, as falcon to her lure.
So voyaging they crossed the waters brown,
And still, or yet their farther way was sped,
Came a fresh host the nearer brink to crown.
"Tis here, my son," the courteous master said,
"From every clime, from every land convene,
Who died with God's high anger on their head.
If eager they to cross the gulph between,
Thoughts of eternal justice are the goad
That turns to longing what had terror been.
Here never soul of good man finds a road ;
Content thee then ; if Charon chafe and fret,
'Twas but his proper spite on thee o'erflowed."
He ended, and a quivering shock, that yet
Appals me, shook those murky realms of pain,
So dread, the memory bathes my limbs in sweat.
The heaving ground, tear-sodden, clave in twain,
And out a ruddy gleam flashed quick as thought,
Whereat ⁹all sense and reason fled my brain,
And I fell, as a man by sleep o'er-raught.

CANTO IV.

ARGUMENT.—*The first circle of Hell—Limbo—
Meeting of the Poets, and enumeration of the
Ancient Worthies here seen by Dante.*

ON the dead trance that held my senses broke
Sudden a mighty thunder, that in doubt
I shook myself, like one by force awoke;
And, starting to my feet, on all without
Bent steady gaze with eye refreshed by sleep,
If haply thus to learn my whereabouts.
Sooth is, I found me on the bordering steep
Of dolorous abyss, which vents the din
Of countless shrieks in one wild thunder-sweep.
Dark, deep it was, and clouded thick within,
That with down-searching eyes and straining
sense,
Assured sight of nothing might I win.
“Now low to lower in yon blind immense
Plunge we,” the bard began, all changed to pale,
“I will be first, and be thou second hence.”

And I, who marked his wonted colour quail,
Answered, "How might I venture, thou being
shaken,

That ever art my stay when doubts assail?"

But he—"Their anguish, that of hope forsaken
Lie there, doth on my lineaments pourtray
Pity, by thee for coward fear mistaken.

Then come, the road is long, nor brooks delay."

He spake, and moved, and through the foremost
zone

That cinctures Hell's abyss, he led the way.

Here never aught of louder plaint or moan

Disturbed the listener's hearing; but the air
Trembled eternally with sighs alone.

The cause, a grief where torment hath no share,

Endured of crowded hostings not a few,

Men, women, infants, all assembled there.

And thus the good preceptor—"Canst thou
view

So vast a throng, nor ask of whom the spirits?

I will thou learn, ere we our path pursue,

These were not sinners; yet, whate'er their
merits,

Suffice not them, wanting baptismal rite,

That each partaker of thy faith inherits.

And if they rose before the Christian light,

Duly they honoured not their Maker's name;

But what these are, am I: our fates unite.

For such default, and not for deeper blame,
Heaven have we lost ; yet this our only smart,
Our hope is not, our longing still the same."

When thus I heard, great sorrow wrung my heart
For many a soul—of worth and honour they—
Who in that limbo pendent bore their part.

"Tell me, dear master, tell me, lord, I pray"—
Thus I, concerned to prove in very deed
The faith that o'er all error gaineth sway ;

"Went ever spirit hence by right of meed,
His own or others', called to happier race?"

And he, my hidden meaning prompt to read,
Made answer, ¹"I was stranger in this place,
When I the advent of a Great One saw,
Whose brow the signs of crowning conquest
grace.

²He our first father's spirit did withdraw,
Abel, and him that built the saving bark,
Moses, who gave, nor less obeyed, the law,
David the king, with Abraham patriarch,
Israel, his sire, and sons : and her, the best-
Beloved, his hard-won Rachel. Of less mark
Were others whom he chose, and made them blest :
And meet thou know, their franchisement until,
No human spirit entered into rest."

Discoursing thus, we halted not, but still
Traverse the wood unbroken journey made,
The wood I mean which thronging souls did fill.

Nor from the cresting-edge, to cross the glade,
Long had we parted, when I marked a flame
Arched in with hemisphere of sullen shade ;
Which or we gained, brief interval there came,
Nor so removed, but partly I descried
Souls harboured there of honourable name.

“ O thou, of Science and of Art the pride,
Say whom such high prerogative hath crowned,
Their portion thus from others’ to divide ? ”

And he to me : “ Their worthiness, renowned
In praises echoing through thine upper sphere,
For this preferment grace in heaven hath found.”

While yet he spake, a voice fell on mine ear :

“ Give glory to the bard of loftiest strain,
His long-departed spirit welcome near.”

When hushed that voice, and all was mute again,
I saw four stately forms approach, who wore
Upon their grave aspect nor joy nor pain ;

And thus my kindly guide began his lore :

“ Mark him who wields ³a trenchant blade in
hand,

Advancing prince-like other three before ;

’Tis Homer, sovereign of the poet band ;

The next is Horace, Satire’s favourite son ;

Ovid the third ; the last doth Lucan stand.

Sith each a title to the name hath won

Wherein the lonely voice proclaimed my right,

They do me grace, and, gracing, well have done.”

Thus I beheld the goodly school unite
Of him, the minstrel-lord of loftiest style,
Who far beyond them soared his eagle flight.
And they, in mutual converse joined awhile,
With beck of welcome all to me inclined,
Whereat my master smiled a gracious smile.
And for mine honour's increase they designed
To me in their companionship a room,
That I was sixth amid that might of mind.
So, journeying on to where light broke the
gloom
Things we discoursed of comely tale when
told;
As comely now that silence be their doom.
Before the basement of a lordly hold
We paused, with 'seven high walls encom-
passed,
Round which, in graceful wheel, a streamlet
rolled.
O'er this, as o'er dry land, lightly we tread;
Thence portals seven I entered with those Wise,
And gained a mead of freshest verdure spread.
Shades there abide, whose slow and serious eyes
With grave authority consign their look,
And rarely heard their mellow accents rise.
Thus drew we sidelong from a corner nook
To open place and high, whence our regard
In free broad light, their utmost numbers took.

There straightway passed upon the verdant sward

The spirits of the mighty, shown to me—

Their vision yet I boast my great reward.

I saw ⁵ Electra there, of whose degree,

With many more, Hector, Æneas, moved ;

Cæsar, with falcon eyes, armed cap-a-pie.

⁶ Penthesilea, Camilla, maids approved

In war, apart I saw ; and king Latine,

With his fair ⁷ child, of rival chiefs beloved.

Brutus I saw, foe sworn to Tarquin's line ;

⁸ Cornelia, ⁹ Julia, ¹⁰ Marcia, chaste Lucrece,

And, seated all alone, great ¹¹ Saladine.

Mine eyebrows slightly raising, ¹² him of Greece

I saw, the master of that brotherhood

In philosophic home who seek for peace.

Him all with reverence, all with wonder viewed :

I Socrates and Plato saw 'mid these ;

Foremost of all, they both beside him stood.

¹³ Thales, ¹⁴ Anaxagoras, ¹⁵ Diogenes,

¹⁶ Democritus, the world to chance who laid,

¹⁷ Heraclitus, ¹⁸ Zeno, and ¹⁹ Empedocles :

Him that of herbs the various worth displayed,

²⁰ Dioscorides, with whom pale Orpheus went ;

Grave Seneca, with Tully's, Livy's shade ;

²¹ Ptolemy and Euclid, souls of kindred bent ;

²² Avicenna, Galen, learned Hippocrate ;

²³ Averröes, who made the grand comment.

Not every name can I in full relate ;

The lengthened theme so drives me, that too few
Are evermore my words the deeds to mate.

Our band, that numbered six, disparts in two :

And to the trembling air, by other track,
From that sweet calm my sapient guide with-
drew,

Then led where all was lustreless and black.

CANTO V.

ARGUMENT.—*Judgment-seat of Minos—Second Circle of Hell, and punishment of the Incontinent—Story of Francesca di Rimini.*

So plunged I downward from that upper ring,
To where the second girds a narrower space,
And louder howlings tell of sharper sting.
There ¹ Minos, ghastly shape, with grinning face,
Sits in the gate, of sins takes evidence,
Deems and apports each by self-embrace.
I say, whene'er the ill-omened soul goes hence
To stand at his tribunal, all is told,
And he, Justiciar named of all offence,
Discerns what mansion each of Hell must hold;
For every step he wills them banished lower
Him turns as many doth his tail in-fold.
Ever before him criminals large store
Stand: each in turn his judgment undergoes;
They speak, they hear, then sink to rise no
more.

“Ho ! traveller, to this hostelry of woes
Wending !” so Minos when he saw me nigh ;
And, speaking, gave his awful work repose—
“Look how thou enter, and on whom rely,
Nor fondly deem this broadest gate the best.”
And thus my guide to him : “What means
that cry ?

Think not his fatal journey to arrest ;
So is it willed to be, where might and will
Go hand in hand, and brook no farther quest.”
Now ‘gan the notes of anguish, fierce and shrill,
Compel mine audience ; now the uncounted
sum

Of mingling outcries on my heart to thrill :
The place I entered of all light was dumb,
And bellowed like the sea with tempest hoarse,
If chance opposing winds to conflict come.
The hurricane of hell with ceaseless course
Of maddened whirls the struggling souls doth
sweep,

Rolls, tumbles, buffets them with torturous force.
Aye, as they turn to front that headlong steep,
There rise the shriek, and wailing, and lament :
There on the Might Divine they curses heap.
Then understood I of that woe’s intent,
How framed with sinners in the flesh to deal
Who to their passion have their reason bent.

And like as starlings in their aëry wheel
Some winter's day float wide upon the wing,
So doth those guilty souls the whirlwind's reel
Now up, now down, now this, now that way fling;
Nor aught to comfort them may soothing
hope,

If not of rest, of milder sufferance bring.
And like to cranes that underneath the cope
Of heaven a long line trailing chant their
dirge,

Did shadows onward borne by that fell swoop
With long-drawn screamings on my sight emerge,
Till I—"Whence are they, master, that so
keen

From the black welkin feel their penal scourge?"
Instant he answered, "She, the foremost seen,
Of whom the historic tale thou hast bespoke,
Was, in her hour, of many a language queen;
So fast enthralled to lechery's base yoke,
Her foul decree made Lust and Law the same,
If haply thus her proper stain to cloak.

Semiramis is she, by ancient fame
The successor of Ninus, and the wife;
Her land the Soldan's heritage became.
Next her, ²the self-destroyed, who paid with life
Her broken fealty to Sichæus' ghost:
Cleopatra next, of vile allurements rife.

Helen I saw, the ten long years who cost
Revolving ills ; and ³Thetis' son, who died
Still struggling with his loves till all was lost.
Paris and 'Tristan—thousand shades beside
To name aright his guiding finger taught,
Lovers, whose love did them from life divide.
While, my wise teacher naming each, I caught
The style of dames and cavaliers antique,
Me pity vanquished, and astounding thought.
Thus I began : " Poet, I fain would speak
To ⁵yonder pair, that, buoyant as the feather,
Float undivided down the gusty reek."
And he to me : " The moment watch, when
hither
The twain approach : and they shall come,
appealed
In name of Love, who bound them thus together."
Whom, as they tempest-driven toward us reeled,
I there accosted : " Come and tell your tale,
Perturbed souls, if none your lips have sealed."
As love-invited turtles, on the gale
Each balanced pinion opening, seek their nest,
So true the impulsive ardour doth prevail,
Such they from Dido's company addressed
Their flight to greet us through the air malign,
So strong my cry from sympathizing breast.

"O breathing creature, gracious and benign,
 That down the lurid air thy way dost wend
 To visit us, who left our blood for sign
 Upon the crimsoned earth, were He our friend
 Who reigns Supreme, thy grief for us accurst
 Should to our orisons thy peace commend;
 And as to listen or to speak ye thirst,
 So will we listen, so will speak again,
 While the hushed wind relaxeth of his worst.
 The land where I was born sits by the main,
 Where Po, declining to the broad sea-brink,
 Yearneth for peace with all his urgent train.
 Love, which the gentle heart is quick to drink,
 Made him ye see for that fair person burn,
 Which how I lost yet harrows me to think.
 Love, that to no beloved one love's return
 Excuseth, made me feel desire so vast
 To pleasure him, as I not yet unlearn.
 Love led, Love bound us in one death at last—
 "Caina waits for him who quenched in blood
 Our being." Such the word her lips that
 passed.
 Since of those tortured souls I understood,
 Bowing me down, so low I held my face—
 "On what," the bard demanded, "dost thou
 brood?"

Whom, finding speech, I answered : " Ah ! alas !
How many sweetest thoughts, how warm a glow,
Lured on these lovers to the dolorous pass !"
Then toward them turned again : " Thy racking
 woe,"

I said, " Francesca, wrings from out mine eyes
The pious drops that sadden as they flow.
But tell me, in your hour of honied sighs,
For whom and how love pitying broke the spell,
And in your doubtful longings made too wise."
And she to me : " No keener pang hath hell,
Than to recal, amid some deep distress,
Our happier time : ' thy teacher knows it well.
Yet if desire so strong thy soul possess
To trace the root from whence our love was
 bred,

His part be mine, who tells, nor weeps the less.
'Twas on a day when we for pastime read
Of ^sLancelot, whom love ensnared to ruin :
We were alone, nor knew suspicious dread.
That lesson oft, the conscious look renewing,
Held us suspense, and turned our cheeks to
 white ;

But one sole moment wrought for our undoing:
When of the kiss we read, from smile so bright,
So coveted, that such true-lover bore,
He, from my side who ne'er may disunite,

Kissed me upon the mouth, trembling all o'er.
The ⁹broker of our vows, it was the lay,
And he who wrote—that day we read no more.”
The other spirit, while the first did say
These words, so moaned, that with soft remorse
As death had stricken me, I swooned away,
And down I fell, heavily as falls a corse.

CANTO VI.

ARGUMENT.—*Third Circle of Hell—Cerberus—
Punishment of the Gluttons, among whom is
found one Ciacco, a Florentine: from him
Dante obtains certain information respecting
the fortunes of their native town.*

My mind returning that had shrunk astounded
Before my pity for that kindred pair,
When purely sorrow my whole man confounded,
Which way I move, which way I turn, and where
Throughout surrounding space mine eyes I
strain,
New tortures and new tortured ones are there.
I am in that third circle, which the rain,
Endless, accursed, chill, and heavy, drinks,
Whose kind and measure aye unchanged re-
main.
Big hail, and snow, and blackening water sinks
Down the murk air in headlong torrent rolled,
All which the soil receiving rots and stinks.

¹ Cerberus, a ruthless beast of uncouth mould,
Barks hell-hound like, with triple gorge and
grim,
O'er those whom yonder slough engulfed
doth hold.

Red are his eyes, black and of greasy trim
His beard, and huge his paunch ; his clawed
hands quell
The mangled sprites ; he flays, and limb from
limb

Rends them : like dogs that hailstorm makes them
yell,

And side for side alternate shield they take,
Writhing them oft, those wretched hosts of hell.

When he descried us, Cerberus, giant snake,
Oped all his mouths, and showed his fanged jaws :
—Was not in me the part that failed to quake !

With outspread palms my guide a portion draws
From the soaked earth, which in full fist con-
veying,

He grasps, then hurls it down those greedy maws.
Like ravenous cur that, silenced of his baying,
Bends his whole aim and vehemence to englut
The bait once tasted, all his rage allaying,
So wrought those demon cheeks begrimed in smut
Of the Dog-fiend, whose thunder to make less,
Fain would the souls their ears were ever shut.

We stepped, our foot upon the phantom press
Thrown prostrate by that grievous hail, and
trode

What seemed their substance, was their nothing-
ness.

They all and each supine the pavement strowed,
Save one who raised him hurriedly to sit,
When full in front he marked us take our road.

"Thou that art borne across this hellish pit,"
He said, "my memory, if thou canst, revive;
Ere mine went out, thy lamp of life was lit."

And I: "Thy racking torments haply drive
Thine image from my mind, whereon to trust
Would thus persuade, I ne'er saw thee alive.

But tell me who thou art, that now art thrust
In place so dire, and punishment so wrought,
If other sting more, none may more disgust?"

And he to me: "'Mid thine own city, fraught
With envy such, e'en now the sack runs o'er,
Once, in the life serene, my place was sought:

Thy townsmen called me by the name I bore,
²Ciacco; for gluttony's pernicious blot
Me, as thou seest, yon hailstorm bruise sore:

Nor me alone, sad spirit; for the lot
Of kindred pain is meted to all these
For kindred crime." He other word spake
not.

Whom there I answered, "Ciacco, thy disease
Oppresseth e'en to bid my tears fall down :
But whither, tell me, if thy soul foresees,
Shall come the men of that ²divided town ?
Who there is righteous ; and the cause relate
Why discord blasts her with so withering frown."
And he made answer : " They from long debate
Shall come to bloodshed ; and the ⁴forest side
Shall chase their foes with working of much
hate.

Within three suns shall downfal them betide
Full swift, their rivals mounting by ³his power,
Whose trimming bark now close ashore doth
ride.

Long time shall they with haughty forehead
tower,
And on the opposer galling burdens lay,
Weep he submissive, or indignant lour.
⁶Two righteous are there, much misprized they !
Pride, Avarice, and Envy, these the three
Live coals that on their kindling bosoms prey."

His tear-compelling note here ended he ;
Whence I : " Unsated of thy lore, I would
Thou grantedst boon of farther talk to me.
⁷Farinata, and that so worthy brotherhood,
Tegghiaio, Rusticucci, Arrigo,
Mosca, with all who gave their mind to good,

Say where are these, and cause that I may know ;
For great the longing seizes me to hear
If heaven above them sweeten, or below
Hell poison." "Them," he said, "in lower sphere
With blackersouls a different guilt hath blended,
If deep enough thou plunge, they must appear.
But thou, to that sweet upper world ascended,
Bring me, I pray thee, back to others' mind :
No more ; mine answers and my speech are
ended."

His eyes, direct before, he squint inclined,
A moment looked on me, then drooped his
head,
And fell with it beside those other blind.
"Henceforth he wakes no more," the master said,
"Until the angelic trumpet burst the gloom ;
When He shall come, the Avenging Power
they dread,
These shall revisit each his joyless tomb,
Put on his flesh and form, and hear the sound
That thunders through eternity his doom."
So step by step, 'mid hail with spectres drowned
In foul sludge mingled, we, the future age
Handling in measure, our slow passage wound.
For thus I asked him: "Shall these torments rage,
The judgment past, with fury more intense,
Or scorch as now, or of their heat assuage?"

Who answered: "Get thee to thy ^owisdom, whence
'Tis taught, the creature to perfection nigher
Of good and eke of ill hath keener sense.

Albeit this cursed race may ne'er aspire
The true perfection of their kind to feel,
Yet lower scale expect they not, but higher."

Discoursing more, which I may not reveal,
Around that street to reach the point where low
A stair descends, we moved in circling wheel;
Here we encountered Plutus, the grand foe.

CANTO VII.

ARGUMENT.—*Fourth Circle of Hell—Plutus—
Punishments of the Prodigal and the Avaricious—The Lake of Styx in the Fifth Circle
of Hell—Punishment of the Irascible.*

¹“Ho ! Satan, ho !—ho ! Satan, ho !—alas !”

Plutus began with stammering accents hoarse ;
And he, the Gentile sage, that learned was
In all, said, for my comfort, “Let not force
Of dread self-nourished harm thee : all too
weak

Is his permitted power to bar thy course
Down yonder chasm.” Then to that bloated
cheek

Turned him, and cried : “Accursed wolf, be
hushed ;

On thine own heart thy wasting frenzy wreak.
Not warrantless to night’s dark realm we rushed ;
So is it willed on high, where ² Michäel
The proud adulterous host with vengeance
crushed.”

As the strained canvass which the wind doth swell
 Wavers, and twists, and falls, if snap the mast,
 So prone to earth the savage monster fell.
Then downward we to that fourth hollow passed,
 Yet fathoming the lamentable steep
 That hoards the bane o' the universe so fast.
Justice of God ! who might such travail heap,
 Such unimagined pangs as there I saw ?
 And wherefore drains our guilt the cup so deep ?
Like the wild wave that round 's Charybdis' jaw
 Doth break itself, encountering adverse tide,
 So here the dancers by the roundel's law.
Here souls more numerous I than elsewhere
 spied
 Urged by their bosoms' load, a whirling flock
 With wolvis howls, from one and other side.
 Headlong they clashed, and instant from the
 shock
 Recoiling each wheeled with a backward swing,
 And screamed "Why gripe?"—"Why bowl?"
 in mock for mock.
 Thus aye they turned them through the pitchy ring
 From all hands to the opposing quarter bent,
 And aye their scurril rhyme would shrilly sing.
 Arriving there, each wheeled and jousting went
 His own half-circle for a fresh career :
 While I, who felt my heart with pity rent,

Said, "Master mine, what race inhabits here
Pronounce, and say if all were clerks, who,
shorn

With clerkly tonsure, on our left appear."

Then answered he: "These in their living morn
Were so distort of mental sight oblique,
They in their spending knew no measured
bourne:

And clear reproof their mutual ~~snarl~~ings strike,
When of that orb they reach the double goal,
Where counterbuffs them sin the most unlike.
These 'clergy once, o'er whom no hairy poll
Is spread, and popes and cardinals have been,
Whom Avarice ruled with tyrannous control."

And I: "O Master, 'mid such host, I ween,
Some certain ones I well might recognize,
That with these very plague-spots went un-
clean."

And he to me: "Vainly thy thoughts devise;
The undiscerning life that soiled them there,
Now smirching hides them from discerning eyes.
Endless shall they to meet those shocks repair,
And join the resurrection from the grave,
Part with clenched fist, and part with curtal hair.
What cost them brighter world was, ill to save
Or ill to give, and doomed to yonder scuffle,
Whose quality I waste not words to brave.

Now may'st thou, son, behold how brief the shuffle
 Of goods by shifting Fortune held in store,
 For which the human kind so fiercely ruffle:
 Since all below the moon of golden ore
 That lies, or all those weary souls possessed,
 Could purchase none a moment's peace the
 more."

"Master," said I, "resolve me yet my quest:
 This Fortune, whom thou touchest of, describe,
 Whose gripe all worldly good hath thus com-
 prest."

And he to me: "Ah! sottish creature-tribe!
 What scandals doth your ignorance becom!
 I will that thou my sentence straight imbibe.
 He who of wisdom reigns o'er all Supreme,
 The heavens created and their guides assigned,
 That every part on other part should beam,
 The light dividing with impartial mind:
 And, patterned thence, He one ordained to sit
 Ministrant head o'er sheen of earthly kind,
 Those unsubstantial goods, as time should fit,
 To change from blood to blood, from race to
 race,
 Beyond the impediment of human wit.
 Hence one seed rules, another yielding place
 Decays, obedient to her judgment given,
 Who works in secret, like the snake i' the grass.

In vain your wisdom against her hath striven :
She first foresees, then judges, and her throne
Maintains, as theirs the other Gods of heaven.

To her mutations truce was never known :
From high necessity her swiftiness sprung ;
So quick supplanter makes thy turn his own.
'Tis she that on her cross is often hung
Of such as owe her praise, yet, all forgot,
Wrong and upbraid her with blasphemous
tongue.

But happy she abides and heareth not,
Amid the first created ones in bliss
Rolling her orb, rejoicing o'er her lot.

Now yet to deeper torment in the abyss
Sink we ; the stars are setting all, that erst
Rose when I came ; to linger were amiss."

We clave the round, the farther bank traversed
Over a ⁵spring whose bubbling currents gush
Down a slope channel that themselves have
burst.

That tide was of the darkest purple flush,
And we, descending there by uncouth way,
Entered, companions of the swart wave's
rush.

In stagnant pool, hight Styx, dilated lay
The waters of that sorrow-laden brook,
Skirting at base those envious headlands gray.

And I, who, gazing, eager insight took,
Within the bog saw shapes in miry plight,
All naked, and of bitter-angered look.
These moved not hand alone themselves to smite,
But head, and breast, and feet; and gnawed
for grief
Their own limbs piecemeal with untiring bite.
“Behold, my son,” thus spake the worthy chief,
“Those human souls who fell o’ercome with ire;
And farther this receive with sure belief,
Under yon tide are sunken, that suspire
And o’er its surface raise the ebullient spume.
Look round, and of thine eyes the proof require.
Clogged in that swamp, they murmur, ‘Sullen
gloom
Was ours, where sunbeams cheer the laughing
sky,
For inly still we nursed a sluggard fume;
And sullen yet ’mid this black slime we lie.’
Such anthem doth their gurgling windpipe
sound,
While bootless they for perfect utterance try.”
Thus by the filthy fen large arc we wound
Between the dry bank and the wash, and cast
A look on each whose voice the quagmire
drowned,
Till ’neath a tower we halted at the last.

CANTO VIII.

ARGUMENT.—*Fifth Circle of Hell continued—
the Poets embark with Phlegyas—Encounter
with Philip Argenti, and arrival before the
Dolorous City.*

¹FOLLOWING the tale I tell—soon as we gained
That lofty tower, and paused beside the base,
High as his crown our eyes upward we strained,
Where we a ²pair of tiny lights saw place,
And yet one other, countersign returning
So far beyond, mine eye could hardly trace;
Then questioned I the ocean of all learning :
“This fire, what spake it? yonder what replied?
And whose device the concord of their burning?”
And he to me: “Far o’er the greasy tide
Whom these await, behold, is just in view,
Unless the marsh-fog interpose to hide.”
Launched from the string was never arrow flew
Speeding away through air so rapid flight,
As while he spake, a pigmy bark that drew

Toward us across the wave, shot past my sight.
A single sailor held her pilotage,
And cried aloud, "Art come, then, felon sprite?"
"Ah! ³Phlegyas, Phlegyas, vain thy noisy rage
This time:" replied my lord, "o'er yonder
mire
To waft us is the limit of thy gage."
As one whose peevish murmurs vent his ire
To hear the practice of some monstrous cheat
Done him, so Phlegyas o'er his angry fire.
Down to the skiff my leader bent his feet,
Embarked, and caused me follow close behind,
Nor seemed a load, till I the crew complete.
Now to our voyage my guide and I consigned,
On went the vessel, and her antique prow
To cut the "unwonted depth of wave inclined.
While the dead channel rapidly we plough,
Rose one that asked, choking with slimy clot,
"O come before thine hour, say, who art
thou?"
I answered: "If I come, I tarry not;
But who art thou, disfigured with such stain?"
"Thou seest," he said, "the mourner's is my
lot."
And I to him: "With mourning and with pain
Abide, damned spirit, henceforth and for aye:
I know thee yet, though filthiness engrain."

With that he stretched both hands our boat to stay;
The wary master saw, and backward flung,
Crying, "Hence ! to thy fellow-dogs away !"
Then on my neck with clasping arms he hung,
And kissed my face, and said, "Disdainful
heart,
Blessed the mother's womb that round thee
clung.

A misproud sinner once *he* played his part,
Nor goodness hath, his memory to adorn,
Whereof his maddening phantom feels the
• smart.

How many kings now *there* set up their horn,
That here shall wallow as in filth the swine,
And leave their names to execrable scorn !"
Then I : "O master, huge delight were mine
To see him in that swinish draff lie drowned,
Or e'er we landed on the lake's confine."

And he to me : "Before the shelving bound
Salute thy vision, this thy longing aim
Shall pleasure thee with full fruition crowned."

'Twas but a moment, and so bitter shame
I saw pursue him from the sluttish crowd,
I therefore yet praise God and bless His name.
"At ⁵ Philip Argenti," all cried out aloud :
With his own teeth the fretful Florence ghost
Turned on himself, his inward sting avowed.

Of him no more—we left him there for lost,
While sudden sound of grief assailed mine ear,
And full in front my gazing eyes engrossed.
Thus the good master : “ Now, my son, is near
The city that of ‘Dis derives her style ;
Great is her host, her citizens austere.”
And I : “ O master, many a mosque-like pile
Issuing all ruddied as from fire, I well
Distinguish yonder mid the steep defile.”
And he returned : “ The fire time cannot quell
Blazing within them lends the crimson glow
Which thou beholdest in this nether hell.”
Thus inward still through every fosse we row,
Of that discomfortable realm the fence ;
One iron mass the circling rampires show.
Nor wound we not in broad circumference,
Until the burly steersman at our side
Shouted, “ Lo, there the entry! get you
hence !”
More than a thousand o’er the gates I spied
That fell when heaven rained angels. “ Who
dares tread,”
They kindling all with fiery anger cried,
“ By death untouched, the kingdom of the
dead ?”
With that my wise preceptor signal gave
For conference in secret to be sped :

They of their high disdain did something wave,
And called, "Come singly thou, let him begone
Who thus presumes our awful haunts to brave.

His late foolhardy path must he alone
Prove if he know, thou tarrying, that before
His convoy wert through rayless tract unknown."

Bethink thee, reader, if my heart full sore
At sound of those accursed words was riven,
Too well believing we returned no more.

"O my loved leader! thou, times more than seven,
Hast wrought me sure deliverance, and freed
When front to front danger and I had striven:

Leave me not thus in helpless hour of need,
And if no farther progress fate award
Our steps reverse together let us speed."

Then answered he, my leader and my lord,
"Fear not, for none is puissant to deny
Our path; such Giver doth the gift accord.

Here wait me, and to thy wearied soul apply
Such cheering food as better hopes create:
I will not leave thee in this gulf to lie."

Thus the sweet sire abandons me to fate
Wending his way. I doubtful stand aloof,
While *No* and *Yes* are battling in my pate.

What pleadings there he urged for our behoof
I might not hear: nor had they parleyed long,
When running home all put their speed to proof.

Then on my master's breast that hostile throng
Shut fast their gates ; who rudely thus repelled
Bent his slow steps to join me. Deep the wrong
His downcast eyes betrayed, his brow lay quelled,
Shorn all her boldness ; and he sighed this wail :
" Ah ! who the doleful mansions has withheld ?"
Then thus to me : " Let not thy courage quail,
Seeing my wrath ; our onward course to mar
Turmoil who will within, I must prevail.
Nor new device is their presumptuous war,
' Already at less hidden gate essayed,
Which yet remains despoiled of bolt and bar.
O'er it thou saw'st the deadly scroll displayed,
And now within it One descends the steep,
Threading the zones unpiloted, whose aid
Shall burst for us these barriers of the deep."

CANTO IX.

ARGUMENT.—*Vision of the three Furies—Descent of an Angel to the help of the Poets—Sixth Circle of Hell, and punishment of the Unbelieving.*

MY cheeks revisited of that pale hue,
Which craven fear laid on, my leader marking,
Repressed the sooner what on his glowed new.
Sudden he stopped, as one attent to hearken,
For weak his eye far in those depths to dive,
So murk the air, the plighted mists so darken.
“Doubtless ’tis ours to conquer when we strive,”
Began he; “if not—from such the proffer
came—
Ah weary time, till other aid arrive!”
Well might I note how he his opening aim
With sequel of a different mark o’erlaid,
His earlier speech and later nought the same.
Yet none the less his word my soul dismayed,
Haply for worser import I misgave
To his maimed accents than their mind conveyed.

"Came ever one to this profounder cave
Of the sad shell, from that first-entered
room,

Whose only curse, to be for hope a grave?"
Such was my question. "Rarely doth the doom,"
He straight responded, "any of us befall,

In journey like mine own to thread the gloom.
True, once before I downward went, in thrall
Of dire ¹Erictho and her magic toil,

Who to their bodies could the souls recal.
Scarce had I stript me of my mortal coil
When she compelled mine inroad on that mure
From ²Judas' orb to drag a ghostly spoil.

That place the lowest is, the most obscure,
From circumambient heaven the most remote:
Well do I know the way; let this assure
Thy heart. The pool, that from her noisome
throat

Breathes pestilence, the city girds of Pain,
Where high offence our late-tried entry
wrought."

And more he spake, which I might not retain;
To that high tower whence gleamed the blazing
crest

Wandered mine eye, and led my mind in chain;
Where instant springing from the void unblest
I saw three hell-born furies, dyed in gore,
Whose limbs and mien the female kind exprest.

The greenest hydras round the waist they wore,
And knotted o'er their awful brows for hair
The horned snake and writhing viper bore.
Well knew my guide the handmaid-troop whose
care

To tend the ³ Queen of everlasting sighs,
And of each fierce Erinny bade beware :

"On the left coign behold Megæra rise;
Yonder Alecto plaining on the right;
Tisiphone the midmost room supplies."

He said no more—each with her nails 'gan smite
The breast, and shrieked, her stricken hand
upthrown,

So loud, I pressed me to the bard for fright:
"Medusa, come; change we the wretch to stone;"
All shouted, while a downward look they cast:
"That Theseus 'scaped, the blame was all our
own."

"Turn, turn thee backward, and thine eyes keep
fast;

If once that Gorgon visage on thee frowned,
Farewell return to life; thine hour were past."
Thus while the master spake, he forced me round,
And both his hands, unsatisfied with mine,
Crossed o'er my face, my visual aim to bound.

O ye, whose spirit wisely can divine,
⁵Search, if ye may, the doctrine that lies hid
Beneath the veil of each mysterious line.

And now upon the turbid waves there did
A crashing sound descend, hideous to hear,
And both the trembling banks together chid.
Even thus a wind, in sultry time of year,
Chafed into fury by the encountering heats,
Whirls through the wood his unarraigned
career,
Shivers the bough, the bruised flower unseats,
And onward, onward, proudly rolls in dust,
The beast, the shepherd routing as he meets.
Mine eyes the bard released, and said, "Adjust
Thy nerve of sight to the spot where fumes
exuding
From yonder ancient scum do most disgust."
Like unto frogs their serpent foe eluding,
That evanescent through the water glide,
Till all on land, their heapy backs protruding,
They cluster, I of ruined souls espied
More than a thousand darting thus to flee
From One who stepped, dry-shod, the Stygian
tide.
Before him oft the left hand waving, he
Shook off the sluggish fog-damp from his
face,
And weary of that sole noyance seemed to be.
I, for I knew heaven's messenger of grace,
Turned to my chief, who signal made to wait
In silence, and my bowed front abase.

How high disdain did his whole mien dilate !

With slender rod, whose touch might nought
repel,

He came, he smote, and wide unbarred the gate.

“ Outcasts of heaven, vile denizens of hell,”

He cried, his foot on that dire threshold staying,

“ Whence doth in you so haught presumption
dwell ?

Why kick ye at the pricks, the will gainsaying,

Whose stedfast end shall never flinch nor fail,

But crush you still, with doubled plagues
repaying ?

To butt with fate—say, what shall it avail ?

’ Forget not whence your Cerberus the smart

Of his flayed jaws and throat doth yet bewail.”

Then on that filthy track he turned to part,

Nor word vouchsafed to us, but showed the token

Of one who feels far other care at heart

Than care of present things, his thought pro-
voking ;

And we our ready footsteps landward bent

Undoubtingly, the hallowed words once spoken.

We entered there by hostile arm unshent,

And I, who longed the quality to know

And forms of doom within such fastness pent,

A still-enquiring glance around me throw

O’er one vast champaign, widening on each hand,

Fruitful of anguish and of ghastly woe.

As where the swamps of ⁸Arles the Rhone expand,
Or as by ⁹Pola, near Quarnaro bay,
That bathes the limits of Italian land,
The surface heaves and sinks with dense array
Of sepulchres, as many here o'erspread
The soil, but far more grimly-fashioned they :
Flames curling through those mansions of the
 dead
So heated, that with fervours more intense
Worker in iron ne'er his craft bested.
O'er every tomb its cover hung suspense,
And moans so piteous from their depth arose,
As told dismay and desperate offence.
Then I : " O master ! of what note are those
That with the sighs of unavailing grief
The burning cells their burial-place disclose ?"
And he to me : " Of heretics the chief
Are here ; each with his sectaries, and load
The tombs beyond thine utmost of belief.
Like with his like ingraved here makes abode,
Nor glow the caves with flame all equal proof."
Then to the right hand turned, we held our
 road
Between those tortures and the terraced roof.

CANTO X.

ARGUMENT.—*Sixth Circle of Hell continued—
Meeting with Farinata degli Uberti and Cavalcante dei Cavalcanti, the former of whom predicts the exile of Dante from Florence.*

Now moves, along a narrow footpath wending,
Between the land-wall and the torturing fires,
My master, I close at his back attending.
“Virtue supreme, who round these impious gyres
Teachest at will my circling feet to glide,
O speak, and satisfy my strong desires !
The race these monumental coffers hide
Might one behold ? The lid from every cell
Is lifted now, nor warder wakes beside.”
“All shall be closed,” he said, “all sealed well,
When they with bodies fetched from other tomb
Hie from the ¹ Vale of Judgment back to Hell.
In yonder cemetery foretaste their doom
With ² Epicurus all his swinish herd,
Who from the body’s death the soul’s presume.

Now, for thy late request to me preferred,
 Nor less the untold longing of thy thought,
 Here soon shall both content thee." At his
 word

I answered : " Worthy guide, I have not sought
 To hide my heart, but that my words be few :
 Nor thou that lesson only *now* hast taught."

" Tuscan, who thus, of honest parlance true,
 Dost living way make through the Place of flame,
 Tarry awhile, an 't like thee : well I knew—
 For well the accents of thy voice proclaim—
 Thee native of the goodly land, which found
 Perhaps too bitter cause to curse my name."

From a sepulchral cave sudden the sound
 Came rushing, that I crept, my blood all cold,
 Close sidling to my leader. " Turn thee round,"
 He cried, " What dost thou ? Turn thee, and be
 bold ;

See where ³ Farinata lifts himself upright ;
 From the waist upward thou mayest all behold."

With eye confronting his, I met his sight,
 And he his breast and face with many a strain
 Upheaved, as holding Hell in fierce despite ;
 While my stout chief with ready hands amain
 Thrust me, the lurid sepulchres between,
 Toward him and warned—" Be all thine an-
 swers plain."

At his grave's foot I pausing, he with mien
Disdainful glared awhile; nor question made
Other than this, "Who have thy fathers been?"
Obsequious I to answer all he bade
Hide nothing, but my lineage full disclose,
Whereat his scorn the uplifted brow betrayed:
And thus: "They bent them fiercely to oppose
Me, with my sires and faction: I, to spurn
And twice to scatter wide so stubborn foes."
"If widely scattered they, as wide return
Once and again," I said, "they knew to win:
An art which yours are wondrous slow to learn."
With that a ⁵ shade, discovered to the chin,
Appeared, and side by side ranged with the
first,
Propped, to my thinking, on his knees within.
He gazed and gazed around me, as athirst
Some other of my company to see;
But, failing the fond surmise hope had nursed,
"If this blind dungeon," sorrowingly spake he,
"Thou pierce by right of sovran intellect,
My son—where is he?—and wherefore not
with thee?"
"Not of myself might I such deed affect;
Who yonder waits," I answered, "shews my
road,
And him your Guido held in small respect."

His own accost, and eke his torment's mode
 Did timely of that phantom's name advise,
 Whence ampler word, responding, I bestowed.

Then sudden starting up erect, he cries,

"How hast thou said, *he held*? Is his life o'er?

Does the sweet light no longer strike his eyes?"

And when he marked me something pause, before

I framed my tongue to give him answer meet,

Backward he fell—and he was seen no more.

But the other, sterner spirit, at whose feet

I stood the while, nor aspect changed, nor head

Nor neck nor side removed, one pang to cheat.

"And if"—continuing former speech he said,

—"The art thou vauntest of they learnt but ill

Such thought torments me more than this my
 bed.

But fifty times the countenance shall not fill

- With waxing light of ⁶ Her who reigneth here,

- Or thou shalt weigh the value of that skill.

And, so mayest thou ⁷ return to happier sphere,

Say ⁸ why the people to my friends hath willed

Such impious doom, in every law severe?"

"The carnage," answered I, "the blood ye spilled,

When crimson all ran Arbia's fatal flood,

Hath with such orisons our temple filled."

He shook his head, sighing in pensive mood:

"Thereat was I not single," he began,

"Nor, surely, causeless with the rest had stood.

⁹ But single I, where general suffrage ran
 The place of Florence from the earth to blot,
 Maintained her plea with frankness of a man."

"So may your offspring in a peaceful lot
 Repose," I prayed, "as you shall extricate
 My ravelled judgment from perplexing knot.
 If I hear right, your glance each coming fate,
 Ere time have brought it round, can well divine,
 But hath no sense in things of present date."

¹⁰ "Like them who see by glimmering light
 malign,

We glimpse," he said, "whatever lies afar;
 So strong the Guide within us yet to shine.
 But clouded all, when these approach or are,
 Grows our mind's eye, nor aught but others'
 tale

May to its ken your human state unbar.
 Hence understand how utterly shall fail
 Our knowledge, when the hands of second
 death

To shut the gate of unborn time prevail."
 Then, like to one his own fault angereth,
 I urged: "Now shall you to that fallen say
 His son amid the living yet draws breath;
 And if my tongue of answer made delay,
 Know he, my musing thoughts were held in
 thrall
 Of the error, by your wisdom cleared away."

Then, for I heard my master's voice recal,
More eagerly the spectral shape I pressed
To tell whom else the glowing tombs inwall.
“More than a thousand of this grave possess
We lie; ¹¹ the second Frederic here hath place,
The ¹² Cardinal too: I talk not of the rest.”
He spake, and hid him. I my steps retrace
To the ancient minstrel, meditating slow
That word envenomed with mine own disgrace.
He moved, and straight, as if in act to go,
Said: “Wherefore is thy mind so sore mis-
given?”
At his demand frankly the cause I show.
“What thou hast heard against thee, ne'er be
riven
From thy heart's tablet,” was his wise command:
“Now mark me”—and his finger raised toward
heaven—
“When thou shalt in ¹³ *Her* happy radiance stand
Whose beauteous eye sees all, she shall reveal
Thine earthly travel, to the latest sand.”
Then toward the left he turned him on his heel:
Leaving the wall, the centre now we seek;
Our path strikes down a valley, whence we feel
Steaming thus far above, the nauseous reek.

CANTO XI.

ARGUMENT.—*Sixth Circle of Hell continued—
Tomb of Pope Anastasius—Virgil describes to
Dante, as they journey downwards, the crimes
punished in the three remaining Circles.*

Skirting a high bank to the farthest verge,
Formed by huge crags in circular array,
We found a throng comprest by keener scourge ;
And struggling through the rank and fulsome play
Of hellish fumes, belched from the void abyss,
Behind a mighty grave-lid held our way,
Whereon I saw inscribed, “ My prisoner is
 ¹ Pope Anastasius, whom by recreant lore
 Photinus led the way of truth to miss.”
“ Needs our descent be slower than before,
 Until our sense the blast that so offends,
 By gradual use inured, shall heed no more.”
My Master thus ; I answered : “ Some amends,
 Lest the time vainly waste, do thou invent.”
“ Behold ! ” he cried, “ e’en such my thought
 intends.

Within yon rocks, their grisly continent,
Step below step, like those we lately trod,
My son, know thou, three smaller orbs are
bent.
Filled are they all with spirits accurst of God ;
But, that anon their view may satisfy,
Learn how and why compact they share the
rod.
Of each malicious act, abhorred on high,
Injustice is the end : for others' woe
Must all such ends or force or fraud apply.
² But fraud in man his proper vice doth show,
To God more odious ; wherefore deeper here
The fraudulent sink, and mourn a sharper throe.
Of the violent is all this upper sphere,
But forasmuch as force is done to three,
Three several rings within its hoop appear.
To God, ourself, our neighbour, force may be,
On these, I say, and what to them belong,
As thou by clearest argument shalt see.
By violent death, by wounds, our neighbour's
wrong
Is wrought, and to his wealth by waste and flame
And ruinous extortion. Hence the throng
Of homicides, and all who strike with blame,
Robbers and spoilers, run their penal course
In the first ring, but not their troop the same.

Upon himself may man lay hand of force

And on his goods; whence in the second
round

Fitly to plain with profitless remorse

Whoe'er deprives him of your world is found,

Who stakes his all with gamester's luck, to
lose,

And seeks for grief where joy should most
abound.

The Godhead's self may violence abuse,

When hearts blasphemous mock at Him re-
vealed,

Or misprize nature, and her boon refuse :

And therefore hath the lower circlet sealed

Sodom and rich ³ Caorsa for its own,

And whom his God-denying heart hath
steeled.

Fraud, to the stricken conscience inly known,

Might man devise on him who faith disbursed,

And eke on him who credence had not
shown.

The bond of love which nature framed at first,

But only that, the latter mode hath slain,

Whence nesting in the second orb lie curst

Hypocrites, and flatterers, and the wizard train,

Falseness, and simonies, and pilferers' trade,

Panders, and cheats, and all of foulest stain.

The other mode alike hath disobeyed
 The love by nature gendered, and repels
 That added bond whence special faith is
 made.

Therefore in deepest orb, where Satan dwells
 On the universal centre, aye abide
 All traitors, withering in that Hell of Hells."


"Master," I said, "in happy clearness glide
 Thine arguments, and duly to its tribe
 Of hopeless heritors that gulf divide.

But say why those who yon fat marsh imbibe,
 And whom the wind affronts, and whom the
 hail,

And those encountering with so bitter gibe,
 Bear not inside the lurid city's pale
 Their punishment, if God in changeless wrath
 Hold them? if not, why suffer they such
 bale?"

And he to me: "Why thus delirious hath
 Thy fancy raved of dreams till now unheard,
 Or whither strays thy mind from better path?
 Canst thou recal no memory of the word
 Wherein thine 'Ethic did of Three dispute,
 Ill tempers all, that heaven's mislike incurred!
 Incontinence, and Vice, and, thirdly, brute
 Insensate Rage? and how Incontinence
 Did less offend, nor bear so guilty fruit?

If of that doctrine well thou mark the sense,
And call to mind what manner souls be those
In outer orbs that expiate offence,
Then shalt thou see why barriers thus oppose
To part them from yon felons, and more light
On them eternal Justice deals her blows.”
“O Sun, that healest every troubled sight !
So full content, thou solving, doth ensue,
Glad me no less to doubt, than judge aright :
Yet once again,” I asked, “thy steps renew,
From where thou taughtest usury was sin
Against heaven’s bounty ; and the knot undo.”
“Philosophy, to all who wait within
Her schools,” said he, “not once alone hath
told
How plastic Nature does her course begin
From Mind Divine, and exemplary mould :
And if thy ⁵Physics’ lore thou well revive,
There shalt thou find, ere many a leaf un-
rolled,
Man’s Art to follow Nature’s lead doth strive,
Like learner by the master’s bent inclined,
Whence Art as grandchild doth from God
derive.
⁶Both these to man, if thou refresh thy mind
In Genesis’ early writ, the Word ordains
His life to foster, and advance his kind.



But other way takes ⁷Usance to his gains,
And, choosing other hope, a scornful war
With Nature and her handmaid Art maintains.
Follow : 'tis time to go : ⁸with glancing star
The Fishes leap the horizontal round,
All on the north-west lies the Wain, and far
Beyond we clamber down the cliffs' ⁹rebound."

CANTO XII.

ARGUMENT.—*Descent to the Seventh Circle of Hell—The Minotaur—Punishment of the Violent against their Neighbour—Parley with three Centaurs, and fording of the River of Blood.*

OF Alpine steepness was the bounding brink
Whereon we halted ere we sought descent,
And sight was there to make beholder shrink.
As is ¹the ruin, that with huge indent,
From native buttress loosed, or earthquake-
shock,
Hath bruised the flank of Adige, this side Trent,
Where from the toppling mountain-ledge the
rock
Sinks to the plain, yet staggeringly doth lift
His shattered crest, and passway thus unlock
To venturous foot, so leaned that crag-built clift
Sloping; and stretched his bulky length lay
there
The ²Cretan's shame, along the topmost rift.

Him the false heifer misconceiving bare,
Who when he saw us, as with cankerous rage
Inly consuming, his own flesh 'gan tear.
Then turning toward him: "Haply," cried my
sage,
"Thy fond belief presumes this ³ Athens' duke,
With whom thou didst in fatal fight engage.
Away, brute shape! no visit his to brook
Thy sister's aid, and monitory string;
He comes upon your guilty pains to look."
Even as a bull, unfettered in the ring
Because he reels beneath a mortal blow,
To run unable, here and there to spring
Essayeth, such the Minotaur in show:
"Speed thee," my guide exclaimed, "to yon
defile;
While yet he rage, 'twere good to drop below."
Descending thus we trod the scattered pile
Of stones that, mine unwonted weight re-
fusing,
Aye slippery glided from my feet the while.
Pensive I went, and he: "Thine eyes perusing
The ruined breach, where I but now dispersed
The bestial warder's anger, set thee musing.
Now learn that when mine ancient errand erst
To speed I plunged me in the lowest deep,
As yet this rocky girdle had not burst.

But a brief while (if I true reckoning keep)
Or e'er ⁴He came, who did from upper round
The chiefest spoil of Satan's harvest reap,
From every part the filthy gulf profound
So shook, methought the universe had yearned
With love, and hence ⁵their fancy to propound
Of world oft changed to Chaos some have learned.
That self-same moment, powerful to dissever,
Here and elsewhere the aged rock o'erturned.
But mark where down yon valley rolls the River
Of Blood—there all whose hand of violence
Wrought others' harm shall boiling lie for ever."
Oh blinded lust ! oh anger void of sense !
To spur us o'er the shorter life so bold,
So fell to steep us in the life immense !
I saw a fosse that bent its ample fold
Bowlike, as if it would the plain embrace,
Exact in all mine escort had foretold.
Between us and the bank's foot ran their race
⁶Centaurs with arrows armed, in lengthened line,
As men above are wont to follow chase.
These, when they saw us to the plain decline,
Halted, and from their troop did three dispart,
First choosing bow and shaft, in hostile sign.
And one cried out afar : " What racking smart
To suffer come ye down the craggy side ?
Speak where ye stand : if not, I loose my dart."

"To Chiron yonder," slightlying my guide
Retorted; "will we present answer make:
Ill must thy headstrong temper aye betide."
Then touching me: "'Tis ⁷ Nessus, who for sake
Of Deianira and her beauty bled,
Then caused his blood its own revenge to take:
Who midmost on his bosom droops the head,
Great ⁸ Chiron he, Achilles' nurse of yore;
⁹ Pholus the third, whom wrath to outrage led.
Still round and round the fosse their arrowy
store,
Thousands they deal, wherever soul bath strove
Beyond her sin's award the flood of gore
Surmounting." As we neared the nimble drove,
Chiron an arrow took, and o'er his cheeks
Did backward with the notch his beard remove.
His giant mouth uncovered thus, he speaks
Unto his peers: "Yon hindmost, mark ye
well,
Disturbs the ground where he for footing seeks;
Sure never ghostly step so ponderous fell."
And my good guide, his breast confronting
nigh,
Where sinks the human in the horse to swell,
Answered: "He lives in very sooth, and I
Down the black vale must lead him thus alone;
Nor pleasure draws us, but necessity:

From hymned Hallelujah ¹⁰such hath flown
Mine unaccustomed charge on me to lay :
Nor robber this, nor thievish soul mine own.
But, by the virtue that upholds my way
O'er tract so savage, grant us of thy band
One who by proof our honour shall assay,
And show us fording where to make the land,
And bear him on the croupe, who is not yet
Spirit, his airy voyage to command."
O'er the right pap then Chiron turned, to set
Nessus the task, and cried : " Show thou their
road,
And plan escape, if other troop be met."
Now, where the boiling surf all crimson glowed,
We edged, with trusty guide, our steps along,
'Mid frantic screams from seething souls that
flowed.
Up to their brow engulfed I saw a throng,
And thus the Centaur : " Tyrant spirits those,
Who spoil of blood and treasure took by
wrong :
Here groan of human-kind the ruthless foes ;
¹¹Alexander's, ¹²Dionysius' cruel shade,
Who caused Sicilia count her years by woes.
Yon forehead with so sable hair displayed
Is ¹³Azzolin : that hair of brighter hue
¹⁴Obizzo of Esti marks, on whom was laid

A step-son's hand above ; sad tale and true."

Now turned I toward the bard, who said: "Be
here

The first place his—to me the second due."

Brief way beyond, the Centaur stayed him near

A company, that all above the throat

Seemed upward from the bubbling surge to rear.

One lonely skulking ghost he made us note,

Saying: ¹⁵" He that heart which Thamís' sons
delight

To honour yet, in God's own bosom smote."

Then I beheld a people that to sight

Gave from the stream both head and neck and
chest ;

There took remembrance of full many a sprite.

Lower and lower thus the blood depressed

Its waves, until they barely bathed the feet ;

Where we our steps to ford the moat addressed.

"As here," the Centaur said, "thou view'st retreat

The bubbling frith in one perpetual wane,

On yonder side—believe me, as 'tis meet—

Still more and more it deepens to regain

Its utmost sounding, till it reach the springs

Whence 'Tyranny must wail her endless pain.

'Tis here the justice of the Eternal stings

That ¹⁶ Attila, who lived of earth the scourge,

¹⁷ Pyrrhus and ¹⁸ Sextus ; and for ever wrings

The tears that gush to swell the boiling surge
From ¹⁹Reigniers two—Corneto's—Pazzo's
eyes;
Who did their highway war so murderous
urge."
Then turning, o'er the ford he backward hies.

CANTO XIII.

ARGUMENT.—*Second Division of the Seventh Circle of Hell—Punishment of the Violent against Themselves—The Harpies—Interview with Pier delle Vigne—Chase of two Shades by Hell-hounds.*

NOT yet had Nessus gained the farther bourne
Of the Red River, when our course we drew
To pierce a wood, where path was never worn.
No glad green leaves, but duskiest of hue,
No fair smooth boughs, but gnarled and bent
awry,
No fruit thereon, but poison-twigs there grew.
Ne'er to so rough, so tangled forests hie
The savage beasts, those cultured lands their
hate,
Which 'tween ¹ Cecina and Corneto lie.
Here the foul breed of ² Harpies perching sate,
Who did the Trojans from the Strophads chase
With dark foreboding of disastrous fate.

Broad are their wings, human their neck and face,
 With taloned feet and feathered paunch, they
 make

Lament from off those trees of strangest race.
 And my good lord, premonishing, thus spake :
 " Know, ere thou farther enter, thou dost stand
 I' the second round, and shalt be, till thou
 take

Way more tremendous o'er the ghastly sand.
 Then mark : thy keen-observing eyes shall
 hail

Things which to my report may faith com-
 mand."

I heard around the shrieks of grievous wail
 From every side, yet saw I not that grieved,
 Wherefore I stayed me, trembling all and pale.

³ I believe that he believed that I believed,
 Among those stocks so piteous voices came
 Of some that hid to 'scape us unperceived.

Then said my master : " Gathering if thou maim
 The slenderest rod in which those branches end,
 Thy present thoughts shall all turn halt and
 lame."

With that a little I my hand extend,
 And, as from one large briar a sprout I tore,
 'The trunk shrieked out aloud, " Why dost
 thou read

Me thus?" And while it blackened all with gore,
"Why tear me limb from limb?"—the shrieks
renewed;

"— Did never pity's dint thy heart make sore?
Men were we once, who now are stocks of wood;
Yet might thy hand more mercy deal, I ween,
Albeit we were the souls of serpent brood."
As from a brand that, lighted while 'tis green,
Burns at one end, at the other hissing spits
The wind that seeks a vent the pores between;
E'en thus the splintered branch alike emits
Both words and blood; whereat as numb with
fear

I stood, my hold the falling fragment quits.
"Could he," the sage replied, "have bent his ear,
Much injured soul, and earlier credence paid
To that my very rhyme depainted clear,
Offending hand he ne'er on thee had laid:
But the unaccepted truth made me to harden
His heart for deed which doth mine own up-
braid.

Yet tell him who thou wert, that he in guerdon
May for amends refresh thy fame above,
At his allowed return, and win thy pardon."
And thus the trunk: "Lured by thy words of love
Needs must I speak, and let it not displease
If, with my story limed, diffuse I prove.

Know, I am ⁶he, that whilome kept the keys
Of Frederic's heart; and as my will inclined

Locked or unlocked it with so gentle ease,
From all besides I veiled his secret mind :
Too faithful to my glorious task, until
Forespent I left me vein nor pulse behind.
That ⁶public stale who turneth not, but still
On Cæsar's hostel bends her harlot eyes,
Pest of each court, and potent aye to kill,
Inflamed all hearts against me ; and with lies
The inflamed inflamed mine Emperor, till for
trust

And joyous honours, doleful griefs arise.
My mind, that purposed in her strong disgust
By death to flee the scorn she so abhorred,
Against my just self made myself unjust ;
But never broke I feälty's pledged word—
No, by the new roots of this stem I swear—
To that my liege and honour-worthy lord.
Let him of you, that shall again repair
To upper world, my memory ⁷disabuse,
Fallen by the blow that Envy dealt her there.”
Then silent as he paused : “ ’Twere sin to lose
Thine hour,” the poet warned me, “make
request,
Resuming speech, if aught thy fancy chuse.”

Whence I to him : " Thou rather ask what best
To thy supposing shall my mind content :
I cannot speak, such pity wrings my breast."
Then he rejoining : " If with liberal bent
This man perform the work, O prisoned sprite,
Thy prayer entreats, may it please thee say
how, pent
In yonder knots, the struggling soul so tight
Is bound, and tell, as haply may be told,
If from such limbs it ever disunite."
With that the trunk, loud whiffling, thus controlled
Its windy current for expressive sound :
" Brief words and few your answer shall in-
fold.
When the stern spirit from the body's bound
By her own deed hath rude disseverance got,
Minos condemns her to the seventh round.
Within the wood she falls, and place hath not
Determined, but where Fortune idly throws,
Like grain of spelt she bourgeons on the spot :
With tender sprays a ⁸wildwood slip she grows ;
Then feed these Harpies on her leaves, and
making
Woes, make no less a window for her woes.
We, like the rest, our bodies now forsaken
Shall come to seek ; yet none be clad again—
Justice withholds what self from self hath taken :

Yet hither must we drag them back, and then,
Each on the thorn of its own shade accurst,
Shall hang our corpses round the dismal glen."
While by the trunk we lingered yet, where first
We stood, expectant of its farther word,
 ⁹Sudden there startled us a noisy burst,
As him that hath the coming signals heard
Of the wild boar, and hunters on his track,
In rustling sound of beasts, in branches stirred.
Lo ! from the left a naked pair, with back
Scratched as by claws, their flight so reckless
 sped,
Of every bough that crossed them made they
 wrack.
" Help, help me, death !" screamed he the race
 who led ;
The hindmost, lagging, mocked his comrade's
 way,
And cried : " O ¹⁰Lano ! not so nimbly fled
Thy wary legs from Toppo's tilting fray."
Then, as had failed him breath for farther
 speed,
Lost in a bushy tuft, he crouched and lay.
Behind, a cry of hell-dogs, swart of breed,
Filled all the forest, ravening, gaunt, and grim ;
Likest to greyhounds from the leash when
 freed.

Full on the squatted wretch they sprung, and him
 With fleshed fangs rending piecemeal, in their
 jaws

Triumphant whirled afar each quivering limb.
 My hand within his own mine escort draws,
 And leads me to the bush, whose dire exclaims
 Rushed vainly out through all its bleeding flaws.

"Of me to make thy screen," it said, "O ¹¹ James
 Of Sant Andr  a, what profit hast thou now?
 Or what my portion in thine earthly blames?"
 O'er it the master pausing: "Who wert thou,"
 He asked, "whose many-breathing hurts per-
 force

Vent blood and anguished words from every
 bough?"

And he to us: "O souls, whose fatal course
 Brings you this havoc's foul reproach to see,
 Which from my proper leaves doth me divorce,
 Gather them to the foot of their sad tree:

Mine was the ¹²town that did the Baptist own,
 Her earlier patron disavowed; whence he,
 By his own art, shall cause her aye to moan.

And but that Arno's bridge doth yet retain
 His imaged presence, and in part atone,
 The burghers' toil, who reared her up with pain
 Over those ashes tokening where had burned
 The wrath of ¹³Attila, were spent in vain.

¹⁴"I mine own dwelling to my gallows turned."

CANTO XIV.

ARGUMENT.—*Third division of the Seventh Circle of Hell—Punishment of the Violent against God, Nature, and Art—Capaneus—Origin of the Infernal Rivers.*

THE dear persuasion of my native soil
I felt, and to their stalk, already hoarse,
The gathered fragments of his leafy spoil
Restored. Thence to the limit held we course,
Where parts the third from second round, and
 where
Of dread inventions Judgment is the source.
Duly so strange presentments to declare,
I say, beside a level tract we stood,
The which its bed of every plant doth bare.
As wound the doleful moat around the wood,
So this the wood of sorrow garlanded :
Here we our footsteps mincingly made good.
A close dry sand for pavement o'er it spread,
None other fashioned than ¹the desert way,
That sank beneath the younger Cato's tread.

O vengeance of the Eternal ! how ought they
Who read the tale, thy workings mark with
awe,

In that my troubled eyes did here survey !

Of naked spirits many a herd I saw,
And plaining all, and pitiful their sound,
Yet seemed the servants of divided law ;

For some supine lay stretched upon the ground,
And some to sit their shrinking limbs up-drew,
And other some went everlasting round.

Of those who moved them was the larger crew,
The fewer those who lay to meet their pain,
Yet had the freer tongue their doom to rue.

Of fiery flakes deliberate slow rain
Fell aye dilating o'er the parched sands,
Like snow without a wind on Alpine chain.

As ²Alexander, o'er those torrid lands
Of India marching, saw the thick descent
Of flaming concrete on his warrior bands,
Wherefore with trampling files he provident
Caused tread the surface, thus the vaporous
power

Timely to quench, ere added heat prevent—
Such of eternal burnings fell the shower,
From which that sand, as tinder from the
steel,

Kindling tormented them with double²stour.

In dance, but not of mirth, their hands they wheel
From side to side, and, hopeless of repose,
Brush off the fresh flakes scorching as they feel.
“Master,” I prefaced, “thou whose help o’er-
throws

All hindrance, but the obdurate demon host
To bar our entry at the gate who rose ;
Say, whose yon haughty bulk that, careless tost
And twisted, seems the plague-fires to defy,
As if on him that ripening rain were lost ?”
And he, that unknown, when he marked how I
Did of my guide his earthly state enquire,
Cried, “As of old I lived, such dead I lie.

If Jove his slavish armourer would tire,
From whom on that last day, provoked, he
caught

The forky bolt to blast me with its fire ;
And tire the rest, as turn for turn they wrought
By the black forge in Etna’s womb concealed,
Crying, ‘Help, good Vulcan, help ;’ as when he
fought

The race who set him hard on ³Phlegra field,
Then strain his utmost power on me to wreak
His will, not this the glad revenge should yield.”
With that my chief’s indignant zeal outbrake
In accents louder than mine ears had known :
“O ⁴Capaneus, that suffering may not slake

Thy native pride, the deeper curse thine own ;
To match thy madness torment ne'er had stung
With due requital, save thy rage alone."

Then, turning toward me, spake with milder
tongue,

"He with six kings confederate king in fight
Beleaguered Thebes, and flingeth, as he flung
Of old, contempt on God and impious slight ;
But, as I reasoned, for his breast hath made
Fit garniture from out his own despite.
Now follow close, nor let thy feet invade
The fervours of the blistered sand, but ever
Narrowing confine them to the woodland
glade."

Silent we came to where a puny river
Was issuing from the wood, whose bright-red
flush

Makes yet my hair to stand, my flesh to shiver.
Like the warm runnel from 'Viterbo's gush,
Parted among the sisterhood of sin,
Did o'er the sandy slope yon brooklet rush.

Its bed and either shelving bound within
Was channeled stone ; the like each margin
lined,

And told that here we must our passage win.
"Of all the wonders which thy docile mind
Hath learnt of mine, since by the gate we came,
Whose threshold-floor to none of mortal kind

Is closed, not one did like observance claim
 Encountering with thine eyes, as yonder wave
 That o'er it quenches every dwindling flame."
So spake my chief: I from his bounty crave
 Meet largess for my new-awakened taste;
 To give the food, as he the longing gave.
"Far sits amid the main an island waste,"
 At length he answered, "Creta named of yore,
 Under whose early king the world was chaste.
Therein a mountain, jocund once with store
 Of waters and fresh leaves—the ⁶ Mount of Ide;
 Forsaken now, like mouldy thing: 'yet bore
The cradled trust, when Rhea chose to hide
 Her son, and, better to achieve her will,
 Bade the loud clang his infant cries deride.
⁸An aged Giant towers within that hill,
 That on Damiata turns his back, his gaze
 On Rome as on his mirror bending still.
Of thrice-refined gold his head doth blaze;
 Of purest silver are his arms and breast;
 Far as his loins a brazen sheen displays;
Thence all below is iron of the best,
 Save his ⁹right foot, on which, of potter's mould,
 More than its mate, his lofty bulk doth rest.
Disrupt is every part but that of gold
 In one huge fissure, whence do tear-drops well,
 Gather, and mining through their caverned
 hold

Precipitate adown this rocky dell :

In Acheron, Styx, and Phlegethon they flow,
Then down yon narrow conduit-pipe impel
Their tide to where, in lowest of the low,
They spread ¹⁰Cocytus' pool, whose nature
here

I not relate ; itself shall quickly show."

And I to him : " If thus from earthly sphere

Yon rivulet her downward channel keep,

Why o'er this selvage doth she first appear ?"

"Thou know'st," he said, "in mighty circle
sweep

These realms ; nor yet, albeit through ample
space

Thy steps have leftward moved to search the
deep,

Dost thou their cocomplete orbit all embrace :

Then, if new apparition greet thine eyes,

Needs not imprint amazement on thy face."

"Master," I urged him, "tell where Lethe lies,

Where Phlegethon : of one thy tongue was
mute,

And one, thou saidst, of yonder rain did rise."

"In sum thy questions please, without dispute,"

Replied he, "but the red wave's hissing
surge

With ready answer well one doubt may suit :

And Lethe shalt thou see, but first emerge
Beyond this vault to where, by penitence
Absolved, the spirits wash their stain to purge."
Then thus: "'Tis time to leave our woody fence;
Tread thou, where first I tread; unscathed by
fires
The margin-lines shall yield us outlet hence,
And o'er them every vapour-flame expires."

CANTO XV.

ARGUMENT.—*Third Division of the Seventh Circle of Hell continued—Meeting with Brunetto Latini, who foretells the exile of Dante.*

Now, as one margent adamantine-proof
Bears us, the streamlet's shadowing smoke o'er-
head
From banks and water holds the flame aloof
From Bruges as to ¹Cadzand, in their dread
Of that swollen ocean-rush, the Flemings heap
Their sea-wall, till the baffled waves be fled ;
Or Paduans on the ²Brenta side, to keep
From harm the lowly grange or castled hall,
Ere summer suns of ³Chiarentana's steep
Be felt ; so fashioned were these bulwarks all,
Howbeit, whoe'er the builder, for his mound
Nor basement spread so broad, nor piled so tall.
So far behind had we the wooded bound
Already left, no trace remained to view,
Though I for retrospect had turned me round :

When lo ! along the embanked mole a crew
Of ghostly shapes affronting flitted nigh ;
Toward us each looked, as when the moon is new
One looks at other in the twilight sky,
And such the sharpened brow they bent on us,
As some old botcher's on his needle's eye.
Of family so large regarded thus,
I straight was recognized by one who caught
My garment's hem, and cried : " How marvelous !"

And I mine eyes, while he to grasp me sought,
Fixed on his lineaments, now baked and sere,
So fast, the fire-browed visage screened him
nought

From mine acquaintance by its altered cheer ;
And, as my hand to touch his cheek I bend,
Made answer : " 'Ser Brunetto, are you here ?"

Then he : " O let it not, my son, offend,
If Brunetto Latini quit the line,
Backward awhile with thee his way to wend."

" My chiefest prayers," I said, " in this combine :
And if to sit with you may better please,

'Tis done, so He consent, whose way is mine."

" O son," he cried, " whoe'er, that herds with
these,

One moment stops, a hundred years o'erthrown
Must feel the flames, nor struggle once for ease.

Then onward be thy course: I hold mine
own

Close on thy skirt; thence join my troop again,
That, as they go, their endless curse bemoan."
I dared not quit the causeway for the plain,
Evening my step with his; but lowly bent
The head, as who fit reverence would maintain.

Thus he began: "What chance or fate hath sent
Thee, ere thy closing hour, to nether scene,
And who is he to guide thy journey lent?"

"I far above, 'mid yonder life serene,"

I answered, "in a valley went astray,
Or e'er mine age had duly ripened been.

But yesternorn I moved for flight away,
And, turning there, his welcome vision spied,
Who me doth homeward by this path convey."
"Thou follow on where'er thy star shall guide,"
He said, "thou canst not fail the port of
fame,

⁵ If in that lovelier life I right applied
My lore; and I—but death so early came—
Toward thee divining heaven's benignant will,
Had cheered thee onward in thy noble aim.
But the ingrate herd malign, that from their hill
Of *Fæsulæ* came down in ancient days,
And hold the dint of rock and roughness still,

Unrighteous hatred for thy righteous ways
Shall deal, and reason ; ill the sweet fig may
find

A place 'mong acid sorbs her fruit to raise.
Old rumour to the world reports them blind ;
A greedy, proud, and envious race they are,
From whose conditions look thou cleanse thy
mind.

For thee such honour keeps thy fatal star,
For thee shall either hungry faction long ;
But let the herbage from the beak be far.
Tread they themselves for litter, that brute throng
Of Fæsulæ ; but from their touch be freed
Whatever plant their dunghill filth among
Grows yet, and yet revives the sacred seed
Of 'Romans, lingering when their home the nest
Was made so monstrous villainy to breed."

"If granted all for which I made request
To Heaven," I answered him, "you went not
yet

Of our humanity thus dispossess.

Dear to my heart, still wakes her sad regret
Your image with its mild paternal air,
As hour by hour (so deep the learner's debt)
You showed how man eternity might share :
And, long as life endures, my grateful speech
How sweet the lesson fitly may declare.

Now write I, what of coming fate you teach,
 And keep with other text for ⁸Her to gloze
 Who well may solve them, if her seat I reach.
 Yet this my mind would of herself uncloze ;
 If conscience lay no evil at my door,
 Content I take the cast my fortune throws.
 Nor is such earnest all unheard before :
 Then let them whirl as wayward will hath
 stirred,
 Fortune her wheel, ⁹his pick the village boor.”
 On his right cheek my master at the word
 Turned him, and, speaking, looked upon my
 face ;
 “ Well doth he hear, who marks what he hath
 heard.”
 Nor silent I the while, nor slacken pace,
 Of Ser Brunetto questioning, who move
 His comrades first in fame and first in place.
 And he : “ To know of some shall well behoove ;
 May we unblamed omit the rest : to tell
 So much the allotted time too brief should prove.
 In sum, these all were clerks, and bore the bell
 ‘Mid learning’s sons, with her best gifts endowed ;
 Soiled equally with one foul spot of Hell.
 There ¹⁰Priscian walks among that dismal crowd :
¹¹Francis d’ Accorso there, and, couldst thou
 crave
 So leprous scab to see, was sight allowed

Of ¹²him to whom the servants' servant gave
Arno's to change for Bacchiglione's vale,
Wherein his ill-strung sinews found a grave.
And more could I recount of; but my tale
Must with my journey end: yonder I see
Fresh waves of vapour from the sand exhale:
A people comes, with whom I must not be:
One boon I ask, let my ¹³Tesoro, son,
Wherein I yet survive, find grace with thee."
He said, and turned him back, and seemed as one
Of them that o'er ¹⁴Verona's champaign use,
The green-cloak race to speed; and seemed to
run
Like him who conquers, not like them who lose.

CANTO XVI.

ARGUMENT.—*Third division of the Seventh Circle of Hell continued—Interview with Guidoguerra, Aldobrandi, and Rusticucci—Apparition of a monstrous shape from below.*

Now had I reached where dinning sounds upcome
Of waters headlong borne to other ring,
Likest the noise of busy hives that hum ;
When I together saw three shadows spring
Swift to divide them from a trooping band
That passed beneath the hot shower's bitter
sting.
Toward us they came, each loudly shouting,
" Stand,
Ho thou ! by whose familiar garb is told,
A wanderer thou from our corrupted land."
Ah me ! what scars of ulcers new and old
Branded their limbs, of scalding fires the trace !
E'en to remember, scarce my tears I hold.

My teacher pausing at their call, his face
Upon me turned, and said: "Here stay thy
feet,

If these thy courtesy would duly grace;
And I could tell how—but for arrowy sleet
Of native flames shot hence—it more became
Thyself than these with eagerness to meet."
There as we stopped expectant, they the same
Old rhyme commenced afresh, and gathering
nigh,

All three combined one whirling round to
frame.

As champions stript and oiled, with wary eye,
Ere mutual stroke and stab confuse the fight,
Their grapple and their vantage wont to spy,
So circling these, on me did each aright
His visage set, that, ever as he wheeled,
His neck and feet went travellers opposite.

"And if the vileness of this flabby field
Us and our prayers have despicable made,"
One said, "and this our favour wan and peeled,
Yet might our old renown thy soul persuade
To tell thy name, who thus the infernal gloom
With living feet securely dost invade.

He, on whose steps I trample, though by doom
He goes all naked and of skin bereaved,
In place was nobler than thy thoughts assume.

His lineage he from good ¹Gualdrade received,
Her grandson, Guidoguerra named ; and store
Of deeds his wisdom planned, his sword
achieved.

The next behind me frets the crumbly floor

²Tegghiaio Aldobrandi :—well, if erst
His voice in counsel had contented more.

And I, with these of equal plague accurst,

³James Rusticucci was ; for whom, I ween,
My haughty wife of evils proved the worst.”

I, had I power the fiery flakes to screen,

Had flung me down amid the group, and sure
My teacher had not unconsenting been.

But, since the blasting burns I must endure,

By stronger terror was my wish o'erborne,
That did to taste their friendly clasp allure.

At length began I : “ Sorrow, and not scorn,

Whereof my heart I may not all divest

Thus lightly, pierced me for your state forlorn,

Since yonder my good Lord to me addressed

Words, by whose warning help mine inward
thought

Of gentles like to you the coming guessed.

Of your own land am I, and ever sought

To tell, to hear, and in fond memory keep

Your honoured names and deeds of worth ye
wrought.

I leave the gall, the sweeter fruits to reap,
Assured to me of 'Him, my truthful guide ;
But first must plunge me as the centre deep."
"So may the informing spirit long preside
Within thy mortal members," answered they,
"So may thine after-glory bright abide ;
Dwell courtesy and valour yet, O say !
Within our native city, as they use
Of old, or exiled all and past away ?
For ⁵William Borsiere, who with us rues
His guilt of late, and goes of yonder train
Consorted, sore afflicts us with his news."
"An upstart people, and too sudden gain,
Such pride and huge excess in thee have bred,
Florence ! 'tis thine already to complain."
Thus I, with upturned face ; and those three
dead,
Who knew such outcry was for answer meant,
Exchanged the look men look when truth is
said.
"If otherwhiles thine hearer to content,"
They all rejoined, "cost thee no more to tell,
O happy thee, so speaking at thy bent !
Then if thou 'scape these gloomy realms of hell,
And turn once more the gracious stars to view,
When to proclaim ⁶'Twas I, shall please
thee well,

Cause thou the nation hear of us anew."

They ceased, and hurrying from their broken
round

Their legs seemed very wings, so fast they flew.
It were impossible Amen to sound

So quickly as they sped to disappear,
Wherefore my Lord saw good to shift our ground.
I following him, not long we went, or e'er

The roar of neighbouring waters came so hoarse,
Our words when spoken hardly might we hear.
Even as the ⁷stream that first, from Po's own
source

In Monte Veso, toward the rising sun
O'er Apennine's left side holds proper course—
The Quiet Water named, ere yet he run
To hide in lowlier bed, and from the walls
Of Forli portion in that name hath none—
Above Saint Benedict in thunder falls,

O'er the sheer edge in single cataract bounding,
⁸Where shelter to a thousand owe those halls;
So loud we heard the crimson tide resounding,
Though deep beneath a broken jagged slope,
Brief hour had deafened me, the sense as-
tounding.

I round the waist ⁹was girded with a rope,
And by its help sometime to take and bind
The Panther of the painted skin had hope.

This, from my middle wholly disentrined,
Obedient, as my guide's commandments urge,
All coiled and knotted I to him consigned ;
Who turned on his right side, and o'er the
verge

A little toward the centre flinging, sends
The cord to fathom deep that rocky gurge.
"Surely some answering novelty attends
The novel sign, on which, as if to speed
Its downward way, his gaze the master bends."
So spake I to myself ; but ah ! what need
Have men for caution with the wise, who can
Not works alone, but inmost musings read !
"That thing I wait for," he to me began,
"Shall soon emerge, and what thy thoughts
surmise
"As in a dream, thine eye shall quickly
scan."

Ever should man from truth in falsehood's guise
Refrain the lips, if lawful ; lest the wrong
Of shame by guilt unmerited arise :
But *that* I might not hide ; and by the song
Of this my Comedy, reader, I swear,
(So may it find acceptance large and long.)
That I from out that gross and murky air
With upward swim beheld a shape arrive,
Such as to boldest heart a marvel were.

Nor other his return, who dares to dive
And loose his anchor, which her griping teeth
In rock or sunken mass is wont to drive,
When up he strains, and shrinks the feet beneath.

CANTO XVII.

ARGUMENT.—*Geryon—The Violent against Art*
—*Descent of the Poets from the Seventh to the*
Eighth Circle of Hell.

“BEHOLD the Beast of sharpened tail, that scales
The mountain height, and walls and arms doth
burst;
Behold, whose rotten stench the world in-
hales!”

These words my leader in mine ears rehearsed,
And, beckoning him, to make for shore he signed
Where ends the marble mole by us traversed :
And that foul effigy of Fraud inclined
Toward us, and floated near both head and
chest,
But drew not up the bank his trail behind.
His face the face of righteous man expressed,
Aspect so mild the outward skin did wear ;
A serpent trunk imbruted all the rest.

Two paws he had, the whole arm's length in hair
Incased ; and knots and speckled rings poured
trayed

On back, and breast, and either haunch, he bare.
Nor ¹Turk nor Tartar ever sought to braid
Groundwork or pattern with more various hues,
Nor more ²Arachne's wondrous loom inlaid.

As oft on river's brink the barges use
To settle, half-afloat, and half-ashore,
Or as the beaver doth his posture chuse
For prey, where dwells the glutton German boor,
Like station had that worst of monsters ta'en
Where marble strip hems in the sandy floor.
His tail shot glibly through the void inane,
Aye writhing up the fork, that scorpion-wise,
Had armed his point with hell-engendered
bane.

"Now have we need to turn," my leader cries,
"And from our path a little space divert,
Toward the fell beast that yonder crouching
lies."

On the right breast descending, o'er the skirt
And utmost edge ten paces' length we paced,
To 'scape the sand and drizzling flames unhurt.
And when beside the beast our feet we placed,
A little onward I discerned, where sate
Forms on the sand, right o'er the gulfy waste.

“ Lest of thy full experience aught abate
In that yon orb contains,” here said my chief,
“ Go now, and learn what travail to their state
Belongs ; but let your communing be brief :
I will bespeak, ere thy return be sped,
Those sturdy shoulders’ loan for our relief.”
Yet once more thus, along the éxtreme head
Of the seventh circle wending all alone,
I sought that mournful session of the dead.
These, while their eyes the bursting grief made
known,
Now the hot soil, and now the vapour-flakes
This side and that with labouring hands had
thrown.
Nor other way the dog in summer takes
With muzzle or with paw, when from the bite
Of gnat, or fly, or torturing brize, he aches.
There as around I bend enquiring sight
On faces which the poignant flame-showers vex,
Not one I know ; yet mark on every sprite
A pouch, that hangs suspended from their necks,
With proper colour all and bearing seen ;
Where each to feed his hungering eye
directs.
As, gazing still, I came their ranks between,
Azure upon a wallet Or my glance
Discerned what bore a lion’s port and mien.

Thence as mine eyes their rolling car advance,
Gannet more white than butter from the cow
On blood-red field I saw for cognizance.
And one that owned Azure a teeming sow
Emblazoned on his satchels' Argent weft,
Asked me, "What in this dungeon makest
thou ?

Away ! but know, (for thou art unbereft
Of life), my neighbour 'Vitaliano here
Shall take his seat, and flank me on the left.
Paduan I 'mid these Florentines appear ;
Oft thundering in mine ears their cry hath
rung,

*Come he, come he, the sovran Cavalier
With pouch that bears three beaks upon him hung."*
His mouth twisting awry, then out he drew,
Like ox that licks the nose, his lolling tongue.

I, lest displeasure at my stay ensue
From him who bade me part for briefer term,
Turned me to leave that weary-hearted crew.
Upon the haunches of the monster worm
I found my leader ready set to ride,
Who warned me : "Now be valiant and be
firm.

By stair so fashioned must we downward glide ;
Mount thou before ; in middle seat will I
Thy place from mischief of the tail divide."

As he that of the quartan feels so nigh

The chilling fit, his bloodless nails are cold,

All shivering he, if shade but strike his eye,

Such I became to hear the things he told ;

But shame o'erawed, whose threatenings of disgrace

In presence of good lord make servant bold.

Then on those giant shoulders took my place,

And would have said—but not, as I conceived,

Came the words from me—"Thou my limbs embrace."

But he that ofttimes had my help achieved

At check, entwined me close, while I bestrode

The beast, and in supporting arms relieved.

Then said : " Now, Geryon, move thee on thy road ;

Large be thy windings, thy descent be slow,

And ponder well thine unaccustomed load."

As backward, backward aye the boat doth row

To quit her moorings, so the monster heels,

Till clearing off he found him free to go ;

Then where the breast had been, the tail he wheels,

And, gathering up the air with finny arm,

He swiftly works his straightened length as eels.

Not higher swelled, I trow, the wild alarm,
When ⁵Phaëton's hand was of the reins forsaken,
For kindling heavens, that witness yet their harm—
Nor when lost ⁶Icarus felt his feathers shaking
Slide from him, as the melting wax released,
While shouted loud the sire, "Ill way thou'rt taking"—
Than, as I gazed, mine own affright increased,
To see but air was round me, and to see
All else from sight had vanished, but the beast.
In calm broad orbit ever floating, he
Swims down, unconscious I of our descent,
Save that I felt an upward gale blow free.
Now on our right a hideous splash, that went
From that deep whirlpool forth, mine ears had drunk,
And gazing down, with outstretched head I leant.
More timid thence adown the steep I sunk,
Such lurid gleams I saw, I heard such sound
Of woe, my cowering limbs with terror shrunk.
Then found mine eyes what erst they had not found,
By signs of mighty plagues that nigher poured
From divers sides, the vast descent we wound.

As falcon on the wing that long hath soared,
Nor lure nor bird beheld, provokes to scorn
The falconer's voice; "Ha! kestrel, art thou
lowered?"

Wearied she stoops whence rapid she was borne
In hundred wheels; then far aloof doth sit
Shunning her lord, with spleen and anger torn;
Thus, grounding in the bottom of that pit,
To foot o' the ragged cliff did Geryon bring
Our human freight, and, of his burden quit,
Sped off, like notch of arrow from the string.

CANTO XVIII.

ARGUMENT.—*Eighth Circle of Hell—Malebolge
—First Pouch—Punishment of Seducers—Se-
cond Pouch—Punishment of Flatterers.*

HELL hath a region, ¹ Malebolge named,
That, like the involving orb about it wheeled,
All massive rock of iron grain is framed.
Right in the centre of the deadly field
A well is yawning, ample and profound,
Whose order in its place shall be revealed.
What thus remains of intercepted round
Between the well and high bank's flinty base
In ² trenches ten divides the sloping ground.
As, one by one, where moated lines embrace
To guard the rampart of some castled keep,
They form a bulwark round the environed
place,
Such look had those that yonder seamed the deep :
And as from threshold of so-fenced fort
To the far brink do narrow bridges leap,

From out that rocky basement in like sort
Went shelving ribs, and mound and trench
they clove,
Until the well concentrating cut them short.
We on this spot, as Geryon's back uphove,
Dismounted found us, and the bard his road
Holds to the left, while I behind him move.
On my right hand new form of anguish showed,
New were the torments and the scourgers new,
To fill that outer hell-pouch thickly strowed.
The sinners naked in the pit we view ;
Toward us the near half borne ; the farther
side
Went as we went, but longer footsteps drew.
Like mode in year of Jubilee provide
(So numerous then their host) the sons of Rome,
Along the ³bridge to pass that human tide ;
When one side trooping to St. Peter's dome
All front the castle, but on other verge
With faces toward the mount ⁴the pilgrims
come.
Here, there, on that dark rock, with ponderous
scourge
I saw a gang of horned fiends equipt,
Whose savage blows behind the phantoms urge.
Alas ! how high with wincing legs they skipped
At the first lash ! nor second stroke nor third
Thenceforth awaited one of all the whipt.

There wending, as mine eyes amid that herd
Encountered one: "For dearth of him to meet
I have not fasted," was my ready word.
Then to recal his aspect stayed my feet;
With me my sweet guide checks his own
advance,
And leave accords, that something I retreat.
Lowering his face, that whipt one tried the chance
To 'scape my notice; but in vain he sought,
While I bespoke him: "Thou of earthward
glance,
Unless thy lineaments deceive my thought,
 ⁵Venedico Caccianimico art,
But wherefore to so pungent seasoning brought?"
And he to me: "Mine is the unwilling part
To say—but thy clear accents thus compel,
And bring that old world's memory to my
heart—
'Twas I that taught fair Ghisola too well
The Marquis' amorous phantasy to please,
E'en as the novel's ribald pages tell.
Nor mourn I here the only Bolognese;
So full this hole our guilty people throngs,
That nor Savena's wave nor Reno sees
Framed to say ⁶*Sipa* now so many tongues.
Of which if pledge or proof thou stand upon,
Think of the greedy breast to us belongs."

With that a demon, ere his word was done,
Lashed him with thong, and said, "For coined
pelf

Here are no women ; pandar, get thee gone !"
Once more I to mine escort joined myself,
Nor many paces made, we came at last
Where juttred from the bank a rocky shelf.
We mounted this with airy step and fast,
And, tripping toward our right the splintered
path,

Thus onward from those 'ambient circles past.
When now we reached where hollowed arch it
hath

Below, for passage to each whip-galled sprite ;
"Halt here, and let those other sons of
wrath"—

My leader said—"with fronting visage smite
Thine eyes, whose favour, while their way they
took

Collateral with ours, eluded sight."

We stopped upon that ancient bridge to look
At the other troop, which facing us drew near,
Doomed equally the driving scourge to brook.
Nor waited my demand my leader dear,
But said : "Note him of ample form ; how
hived

His grief within, he never droppeth tear.

What regal bearing hath in him survived !

'Tis ⁸ Jason, whose brave heart and thoughtful
head

The Colchians of their fleecy prize deprived.

By Lemnos' isle his onward sail he sped,

When the bold females of unpitying breast

Had sent their males to mingle with the dead.

There he with signs and converse courtly drest

Did the fond girl Hypsipyle beguile,

Whose own deceit had erst beguiled the rest.

Pregnant, forlorn, he left her on that isle.

Such crime condemns him to such harm, the
woes

Of wronged Medea venging aye the while.

Who in like sort seduces, with him goes.

Enough ; of this first moat, and whom it shuts

Within its griding fangs, my tale I close."

Now came we where the narrow footway juts

A cross configuring with the second mole ;

And, shouldered thus, in second arch abuts.

Here heard we some that grumble sounds of dole,

And smite themselves with open palms, and puff

From sputtering mouth, in the next pouch-like
hole.

The banks with mustiness were furred and rough ;

Such paste the upsteaming feculence had

smeared,

That eyes and nose doth nauseously rebuff.

So deep the bottom, no fit place appeared
To yield a prospect, till the ridge were gained
Where highest arch the shelving rock had
reared.

Hither we came, and hence my sight I strained,
Till down the ditch I figures floundering mark
In filth that seemed from human draught-house
drained.

There, as with searching eyes I pierce the dark,
I saw a scalp with dung so clotted o'er,
'Twere hard to tell if layman owned or clerk.
"Wherefore so greedy thou to view me, more
Than my foul comrades here?" he cried in
spleen:

"Because," I said, "I've seen thy face before
If memory fail not, when thy locks were clean:
⁹ Alessio Interminei of Lucca thou,
And hence my singling gaze eyed thee so
keen."

He smote his ¹⁰pulpy nowl: "In this vile
slough

The tongue, that once with base cajoleries
Could ne'er be satisfied, hath plunged me
now."

My guide took up the word, and "Stretch," he
cries,

"Thy face a little farther out, to where
The sluttish feature shall engage thine eyes

Of yonder wench with loose dishevelled hair,
That now stands up, now sidelong bends to lie,
And still with soil-grimed nails her skin doth
tear.

'Tis ¹¹Thais, wanton quean, who made reply,
Her paramour demanding : ' Dost thou feel
Much gratitude to me ?' ' Yea, wondrous I.'
Hence let our eyes content them with their meal."

CANTO XIX.

ARGUMENT.—*Third Pouch—Punishment of the
Simoniacal—Conversation with Pope Nicholas III.*

HA ! Simon Magus !—ha ! thy caitiff sect !
The things of God, by right ordained to wed
With goodness, ye by grasping hands direct,
For gold and silver, to adulterous bed.
Now, for ye people the third pouch of Hell,
Must sound for you the trumpet of the dead.
Already o'er the next sepulchral dell,
Climbing the rock-reef on that part, we rose
Where, plumb below, the centre deepest fell.
Wisdom supreme ! what skill thine order shows
In heaven, in earth, and in the accursed place !
How just the measure thy strong arm bestows !
I saw along the sides and o'er the base
All pierced with ¹holes that rock of livid grain,
And each was round, and all of equal space.
Nor ampler room, nor less, do they contain,
Which deck mine own, my beautiful Saint John,
Framed for the service of the ²Baptist train :

One among which (nor many years are gone)
I broke, a drowning struggler's life to win ;
Be this my pledge to each misjudging one.
O'er every opening's mouth a child of sin
Showed both his feet, and of his legs upturned
Far as the calf ; the rest was hid within.
The lighted soles of all so fiercely burned,
In strong convulsive darts they shot each joint,
That ropes of broom or withy's hold had
spurned.
As lambent fire on stuff which oils anoint
Is lightly wont o'er the outer rind to play,
Such here it flickering glanced from heel to
point.
" Whose is the tortured spirit, master, say,
More madly writhing than its mates that fill
Yon holes ; whom redder flame doth suck for
prey ?"
I asked, and he made answer, " If thou will
I bear thee downward to yon lower brink,
Himself shall tell his name and deeds of ill."
" Thou art my Lord, thou know'st I never shrink
From thy good pleasure ; welcome to my soul
What pleases thee ; thou knowest all I think."
I said : we reached the fourth departing mole,
Thence on the feebler hand took downward road
To where the straitened floor had many a hole.

Nor the kind master mine unwonted load
Dropped from his hip, till close beside the rift
He placed of him whose legs his torment
showed.

“O thou that dost thine upwards downward shift,
Whose-e’er thy wretched ghost, as stake fast-
driven,
If yet thou canst,” I said, “thy voice uplift.”
There stood I like the ³monk, when, yet un-
shriven,
The false assassin, to his grave now tied,
Recals him for brief respite ’mid the living.
“Art thou already there above?” he cried,
“Art thou above there, ⁴Boniface, indeed?
Then hath of sundry years my writing lied.
That ⁵having—could it satiate thy greed
So soon, which hardened thee to seize by
plot
The comely ⁶Spouse; then to vile ruin
lead?”

My look was theirs, who understanding not
Some answer made them, as to scorn betrayed,
Are halting, and to answer know not what.
With that spake Virgil: “Haste thee, tell yon
shade
‘I am not he—not he—thy fancy guessed.’”
And, he prescribing, I that answer made;

Whereat the soul his feet awry did wrest ;
Then deep suspiring, and in plaintive tone,
Demanded, " What of [']me, then, would thy
quest ?

If thee so much imports to have me known,
Thou hast the bank descended, learn that erst
[']I wore the mighty mantle for mine own :

And was the bear's true son, and duly nursed
The bear-whelps ; to advance our brood so
bent,

I wealth above, and here myself imbursed.

And underneath my head the rest, who went
Before me bartering souls for silver, all
Lie flat within this rocky crevice pent.

I thither tumbling in like sort shall fall
At his approach, whose voice I thought to
hear,

When my sharp question did thy word forestal.

["]But I already thus my feet to sear
Stand planted upside down a longer time
Than him awaits the reddened soles to rear ;
Since after him shall come from western clime,
Foredoomed, a lawless pastor of the fold,
To hide both him and me with uglier crime.

Another ["]Jason he, of whom is told
In Maccabees ; and as his prince was kind
To him, shall France's king this thief uphold."

I know not here if folly swayed my mind
Too much, that I mine answer tuned so free :
“Tell me, or e’er He gave to loose and bind,
For how great treasure did our LORD agree
To sell the keys to Peter ? Sure, the most
Of His demand was this : *Follow thou me.*
Nor gold nor silver at Matthias’ cost
Sought Peter and his fellows, when the room
He took by lot, perdition’s son had lost.
Wherefore be still, for righteous is thy doom,
And o’er thine ill-got money keep good ward,
Which made thy pride to gainsay ¹⁰ Charles pre-
sume.
And were it not I reverence yet accord,
And bow mine impulse to those awful keys
Of which thou in that happier life wert lord,
I had rebuked with sterner words than these :
For sadness o’er a world your avarice flings,
Trampling the good, to give the wicked ease.
¹¹Such shepherds knew the Evangelist ’mid
things
Revealed, when she who sitteth on the flood
Was seen of him to play the whore with kings :
Who at her birth seven heads uplifting stood,
And the ten mystic horns for witness bore,
¹²While virtue to her husband yet seemed good.
Silver and gold ye make your god : what more

Divides the brute idolator and you,
Save that he one, a hundred ye adore ?
Ah, Constantine ! what ills have we to rue—
I say not from thine own conversion sprung,
But from thy ¹³dower, the first rich father drew !”
And while to him in notes like these I sung,
Orpricked by rage, or conscience’ gnawing tooth,
In furious spurnings both his feet he flung.
I trow it pleased my leader, in good sooth,
So listened he, with still-approving lip,
The daring sound that syllabled the truth :
Then me with both his arms did straitly clip,
And, all my weight upon his breast upstrained,
Where he descended, up the way ’gan trip :
Nor for my clinging of his speed refrained,
Until he brought to where the arch was crowned,
And from the fourth the fifth embankment
gained.
¹⁴Then softly placed his burden on the ground—
Softly upon that wild and rugged slope,
Where e’en the mountain goat hard pass had
found.
Thence did another vale her wonders ope.

CANTO XX.

ARGUMENT.—*Fourth Pouch—Punishment of the Soothsayers—Legend of Manto, and the Foundation of Mantua.*

To tell new vengeance must I shape my verse,
And give material to the twentieth strain
Of my first Song, the tale of souls immerse.
Already to mine utmost I was fain
To bend mine eyes down where the uncovered
deep
Was wet with drops of agonizing pain.
There saw I figures round that valley's sweep
Silent and tearful move the pace that man
In earthly 'litanies is wont to creep;
Who, as their lower parts I glancing scan,
Did each appear wrested in strangest sort,
Below the chin to where the chest began.
For backward from the loins each front distort
With retrogressive course compelled to go,
And onward look eternally must thwart.

Haply some mortal sufferer by the blow
Of wrenching palsy thus hath swerved awry ;
But such I never knew, nor think to know.
So, reader, may the gift of God supply
Fruit from thy reading, as thy own heart shall
tell

How I might contemplate with tearless eye
Our common human image, seen too well
So twisted, that the rain their eyes expressed
Down its cleft channel on their rearward fell !

Certes I wept so, leaning toward a breast
Of that hard shelf, mine escort chiding said :
“Why wilt thou yet be foolish as the rest ?

² Here pity best hath life when wholly dead :
What guiltier wretch than he whose grief
avowed

Impugns Almighty Judgment ? Lift thy head,
Lift and behold for ³whom, before the crowd
Of gazing Thebans, earth her womb revealed,
That ‘Whither dost thou rush ?’ all cried
aloud,

‘Ho ! Amphiaraus ; wherefore quit the field ?’
While he fell plunging ever to the glade
Where Minos’ gripe the dead man’s doom hath
sealed.

Mark how his shoulders he for breast hath made ;
Because too far beyond his sight would range,
His eyes, his path, must now be retrograde.

'Tiresias see, who felt mutation strange,
When he for male did female sex assume,
Of all his members suffering full exchange :
And once again, for such his after-doom,
The twining serpent pair smote with his rod,
Or e'er his cheeks retook the manly plume.
Close on his paunch doth ⁵Aruns backing plod :
On Luni, where ⁶Carrara peasants slave,
Who dwell beneath her hills, to weed the sod,
'Mid whitest marbles there he found the cave
Of his abode, whence nothing checked his gaze
On starry courses, or on Ocean wave.
She, on whose hidden bosom loosely strays
Each ringlet, and a willing screen expands,
Who turns from us the skin which hair arrays,
Was Manto, wanderer once through many lands,
Seeking the rest she found ⁷where I was born,
My tale of whom a little while demands
Thine audience. When her sire from life was torn,
And Bacchus' town became a ⁸tyrant's thrall,
For many a year she roamed the world for-
lorn.
High in fair Italy, where Alpine wall
Above Tyról doth German land inclose,
Lieth a lake, which men ⁹Benacus call :
In thousand fountains o'er Pennino flows,
From Valdimonica to Garda round,
The element, to win that lake's repose.

There ¹⁰Pastors three on central spot of ground,
The Brescian, Veronese, and he of Trent,
Could sign their blessing, if by that way bound;
There sits ¹¹Peschiera, goodly muniment
And strong, the Bergamasks' and Brescians'
pride

Confronting, where the bank hath lowest bent.
Here all that in Benacus' lap to hide
Obtains no room, by nature's law descends
And fills a stream through verdant meads to
glide.

When from that heading lake the current wends,
Benacus now no more, he Mincius hears,
Till, at ¹²Governo lost, in Po he ends.

Nor long his course, ere spacious flat appears,
Which flooding wide he turns to marish waste,
And breathes bad influence oft in sultry years.

There, as the maid went by, a spot, embraced
By plashy swamps surrounding, met her ken;
No culture tamed it, and no dweller graced.

There, sternly fixed to shun all haunt of men,
Dwelt she with slaves, her ancient arts to do;
There lived, and left her body to that fen:

Thither in after days the scattered few
Of neighbours gathering came, so strong the
spot

From watery fence the marsh around it threw

They built their city where those bones did rot,
And, for her praise who harboured there the
first,

They Mantua named, nor cast another lot.
More crowded once the host within it nursed,
Ere yet the ¹³Casalodi's witlessness
Met Pinamonte's guile, and had the worst.

Therefore I warn, when other shall profess
To tell my country's birth in different tale,
That no trim falsehood may the truth oppress."

"Master," I said, "so certainly prevail
Thy wise discoursings, and such faith beget,
Like dying embers all the rest should fail

To kindle my belief. But tell who yet
Come marching, as thine eye the worthier ones
Shall note; on them alone my mind is set."

"That shape," he said, "whose ample beard
o'erruns

His swarthy shoulders drooping from the cheek,
An ¹⁴augur once, when Greece, bereft of sons,
To fill her cradles scarce retained a Greek,
With Calchas joined, the favouring moment he
To cut their cables gave in Aulis' creek.

Eurpylus his name; in which agree
Some certain strains of mine high tragic lay;
As well thou know'st, where all is known to
thee.

Yon other phantom in his living day
Was ¹⁵Michael Scott, that shows a flank so
spare ;
Of magic sleights he truly learned the play.
See ¹⁶Guy Bonatti, ¹⁷Asdentè see, whose care
Fain would he now the pack-thread and the skin
Had all engrossed: too late repents him there !
See the vile hags, who left their web and pin,
Needle and spindle, fortunes to divine,
With herb and image working deeds of sin.
But come ; e'en now ¹⁸Cain's dusky thorns incline
To touch the western wave below Seville,
And hang on either hemisphere's confine.
But yesternight her orb the moon did fill,
And well mayst thou remember, for her glance
Lit up the forest glooms, nor wrought thee ill."
Thus he, and while he speaks, our steps advance.

CANTO XXI.

ARGUMENT.—*Fifth Pouch—Punishment of the
Peculators—Virgil's parley with the Male-
branche, a band of whom escorts the Poets.*

So onward journeyed we from bridge to bridge,
Things which my Comedy cares not to mark
Discoursing, till we gained that utmost ridge.
There other bootless wail we paused to hark
In Malebolge—other cleft withal
To see, that showed unutterably dark.
As boils the clammy pitch at winter's fall,
Of gallies or of argosies to calk
The shattered hulls, in Venice' arsenal,
Where mariners whose voyage tempests balk,
This builds his craft anew, that stops with tow
The sides of her that oft her watery walk
Hath trod : one hammers stern, another bow,
And one shapes oars, one twisting shrouds doth
toil,
And now the mizen mends, the foresail now :
So, not by fire, but art divine, to boil
Did there below thick-clotted pitch upswell,
And glued the bank around with slimy soil.

Isaw, but saw not in that seething hell,
Save bubbles which the boiling upward threw,
And how the pimpled surface rose and fell.
While downward thus I riveted my view,
“Beware ! beware !” in haste my leader bade,
And me from where I stood toward him drew.
With that I wheeled, as man who hath delayed
To look on what compels to turn his back,
And whom his sudden fear hath all dismayed,
That not for gazing he his flight may slack ;
And I beheld a devil, black as night,
Come running up the shelf upon our track.
His aspect, ah ! how terrible to sight !
How harsh his bearing, and instinct with hate !
His pinions open, and of foot so light.
His haughty shoulder keen a sinner’s weight
Loaded with both its haunches, while his claw
Griped the foot-sinews of that human freight.
“Ye of our bridge, ho ! Brothers of ill Paw,”
He cried, “lo ! here ¹Saint Zita’s senator :
Plunge him beneath, while I again withdraw
To that same land, endowed with such good store :
There, save Bonturo, every man’s a cheat,
There pence make *yes* of what was *no* before.”
Then flung him down, and turning, sped so fleet
O’er the hard rock—did mastiff never chase
The flying thief so fast along the street.

His victim dived, then ²rose with upward face,
Whereat the fiends, below the bridge who keep,
Cried, "Here the Holy Visage hath no place;
Far other swimming this than Serchio's deep;
Then, as thou wouldest not our tenters' scratch,
Take heed thou ne'er the pitchy tide o'erleap:
Here under covert must the dancers match;"
Then added, while their hundred prongs in him
Set tooth, "Good skulking here, if aught thou
snatch."

So master-cooks their scullions from the rim
Teach ever toward the middle of the pot
To thrust the meat with flesh-hook, lest it swim.
Thenspake my generous chief, "Go, hide theesquat
Behind some crag which may for shelter fit,
That of thy presence these advise them not.
Nor thou for outrage done to me permit
Thy heart to fear: my plans are well bestowed;
Ere now like quarrel challenging, my wit
Hath proved." So from the bridge-head took his
road

Downward, and when he mounted the sixth
mound,
Much needed that a dauntless front he showed.
For with such fury and tempestuous bound
As spring the dogs some beggar-wight to rend,
Who sudden stops and craves with whining
sound;

Did from below the bridge these starting bend
On him their flesh-prongs all in dense array ;
Who sternly warned: "Dare none of you offend.
Or e'er your grapnels shred my limbs away,
Come one before his mates, to hear my word,
And counsel then to hook me, as ye may."
"Go, Malacoda," they with one accord
Exclaimed ; and one came muttering, as the rest
Stood still, "What rescue can his speech
afford?"
"Thinkest thou, Malacoda, I had pressed
My step thus far, from your defences freed,
All barriers won that could my way contest,
Without the Will Divine and fate to speed ?
Nay, let me go, for on this savage path
'Tis willed in heaven that I another lead."
So spake my master : he, his haughty wrath
Abating, at his feet the hook he plied
Let fall, and schooled his fellows: "Must no
scathe
Assail him here." "Ho ! trembler, that dost hide
Crouching the bridge's rugged brows among,
Rejoin me now securely." Thus my guide :
"Then I toward him moved swiftly, and the
throng
Of devils so rushed forward, that my doubt
Was sore, lest they their new-made compact
wrong.

So from ³Caprona when the servant rout
 Conditionary marched, like timorous mood
 Seized them to see all foemen round about.
Shrinking I drew my person, as I stood,
 Close to my leader's side, nor dared mine eyes
 Turn from their countenance, that was not
 good.

They levelled each his drag, and "Wilt thou,"
 cries

 One to the other, "that his back-parts feel
 My weapon's touch?" "Aye," quoth his mate,
 "surprise

The stranger with its trick." But sudden wheel
 The demon made, who with my chief con-
 versed,
And cried, "Drop, Scarmiglione, drop thy
 steel."

Then thus: "Your onward way is stopt, where
 erst

 Along this reef ye journeyed, in such kind
 Down to its basement shivered all and burst
The sixth arch lies: if ne'ertheless your mind
 Yet urge you to advance, this causeway climb,
 On neighbouring reef good transit shall ye find.

⁴Know thou, five added hours to this of prime
 Made yesterday twelve hundred years that fill
 With other sixty-six the lapsed time

Since here the road was broken. 'Tis my will
Of these to send spies yonder, that for air
None raise him : join their company, nor ill
Suspect from them : ho, ⁵ Calcabrina there,
Alichino, and thou, Cagnazzo," he began,
" With Libicocco Draghignazzo pair,
And Barbariccia lead the decade's van :
Farfarello with mad Rubicante combine,
" With tusked Ciriatto Graffiacan :
And round the boiling birdlime while your line
Searches, to yonder twain safe convoy be,
Where other crag bends all-unbroken spine
Across the dens." " Alas ! what do I see ?
Master," I cried, " no escort ! let us part
Alone ; guide, an thou know'st ; none else for
me.
Markest thou not, so wary as thou art,
How these display their teeth with grinning leer,
And from their eyebrows menace deadly smart?"
And he to me : " I will not have thee fear ;
Even as they list, their grinning mocks be flung
Justly to taunt the sodden sufferers here."
They, up the leftward bank or e'er they sprung,
Did, each one turning him, their chieftain hail
With spluttering signal of the teeth and tongue,
While he had made a trumpet of his tail.

CANTO XXII.

ARGUMENT.—*Fifth Pouch continued—Cunning displayed by a Navarrese to elude the vengeance of the Malebranche—Their consequent scuffle, and separation from the Poets.*

OFT have I seen when fielded cavaliers
Struck tents, or led the onset, or their band
Mustered, or haply wheeling, as their fears
Advised retreat : I've seen across your land,
O ¹ Aretines, now scout, now squadron dashing ;
Seen tourneys fought and joustings, at command
Sometime of trump, sometime of bells wild
clashing,
And drums, and castled 'larums heard afar,
And things of ours, and things of stranger
fashion ;
But ever moved to quainter pipe of war
Or horsemen's troop or footmen's saw I not,
Nor ship at beacon shown from earth or star.

With the ten fiends we went—ah ! hideous lot—
Companioning, to make the proverb good,
*With saints in church, in taverns with the
sot.*

But I intently o'er the pitch to brood
Hung searching what that hell-pouch might in-
grave,
And whose the souls that of the scalding flood
Lay burnt. As dolphins o'er the surgy wave
Arching their flank for signal, when they bid
The mariner bethink him how to save
His vessel, thus in strugglings to be rid
Of the agony, some sinner dared to show
His back above ; then quick as lightning hid.
And as along some ditches brink in row
The ranging frogs their muzzles only pout,
And hide the feet and bloated trunk below,
So every side the sinful ones peered out,
So stood, till, Barbariccia drawing near,
Beneath the boiling mass in hasty rout
They plunged again. I saw—and yet with fear
Shudders my heart—one linger, as hath chanced
A frog, whose fellow shoots to disappear :
And Graffiacan, that opposite advanced
Stood nighest, grappling him 'gan upward haul
By the pitch-clotted hair—seemed he had
lanced

An otter. I the several names of all,
As they were chosen, had in memory stored,
And marked how each his comrade wont to
call.

“Ho ! Rubicantè, be thy talons scored
Upon that back, and deep enough to flay :”
Screamed all at once that execrable horde.

And I, “Sweet master, gather, if you may,
What luckless wight cometh to be so torn
By the adversaries’ hand.” My guide, his way
Close bending to the side of that forlorn,
Demanded whence he came ; who answered
strait,

“²I in the kingdom of Navarre was born :
My mother on a Spanish lord to wait
Placed me, conceived by her of ribald sire,
The waster of himself and of his state.

The good king Tybalt serving next for hire,
I ventured there in briberies to dip
My hands, and here atone in liquid fire.”

Ciriatto then, projecting o’er whose lip
A boar’s tusk armed on either side the jaws,
Proved feelingly to him how one could rip.
The mouse had fallen ’mong cats of evil claws ;
But Barbariccia with a strict embrace
Grasped him, and said, “Stand all aside, and
pause

Until my fork impale him :” then, his face
Turning, bespoke my master thus : “ If more
Thou crave, ere others rend him, ask apace.”
“ Tell if thou know’st a Latin, I implore,
Amid those lost ones,” my conductor said,
“ Under the pitch:” and he, “ Brief while before
I quitted one, the Latin’s neighbour bred :
Would, I with him were covered ! so nor touch
Of tenter-hook nor talon might I dread.”
With that snarled Libicocco, “ We too much
Have borne ;” then, fastening on the arm his
crook,
Wrenched off a dangling sinew in its clutch.
Nor Draghignazzo thirsted less to hook
His legs below ; whence round and round him
went
The fiendish decury with bitter look.
Their lust of vengeance now a little spent,
Of him, that wistfully upon his maim
Was gazing yet, my guide incontinent
Asked—“ Who was he, whom quitting for thy
shame
Thou crawledst up the brink to look abroad ?”
“ Frate Gomita,” said the ghost, “ his name,
Gallura’s prefect, vessel of all fraud,
Who, finding in his grasp his Liege’s foes,
So treated, they their luck may well applaud :

Monies he took, and, as his story goes,
 Themselves let loose : alike in every post
 No petty knave, but paramount he rose.
With him consorts ' Don Michel Zanche most
 Of Logodoro, and when these begin
 Talk of Sardinia, so their tongues engrossed
Seem ne'er to tire—but ah ! my heart—the
 grin
 Of yonder demon see : more could I tell,
 But fear lest he prepare to scratch my skin.”
And their high provost, turned to Farfarell,
 Who leered with eyes asquint, ready to smite,
 Exclaimed, “ Stand off, malignant bird of
 hell.”
“ If such your will for hearing or for sight,”
 Resumed the startled spirit, “ I can draw
 Tuscans or Lombards, as ye list, to light :
But let awhile the Brethren of Bad Paw
 Hold back, lest these of their revenges aught
 Suspect : then with my whistle—such our law
For him of us that has the surface sought—
 I sitting in this very place, for one,
 My worthless self, will cause that seven be
 caught.”
Cagnazzo, scornful at his word now done,
 Replied with wagging head and snout upcurled,
 “ Hear but his knavish art to get him gone,

Plunging beneath :” and he, who owned a world
Of wealth in snares : “ Much knavery, sure, is
mine,
Contriving thus how mightier woe be hurled
Upon my friends.” No longer Alichine
Refrained his mates to gainsay : “ If thou flee
Downward,” he cried, “ I will not on thy line
Come galloping, but flap that pitchy sea
With wings. Leave we this hill, the bank be
screen,
And witness which the stronger, thou or we.”
Thou, gentle reader, a new game, I ween,
Shalt hear. As all to other side withdrew
Their eyes, he first, that had the sternest been
To disallow, the Navarrese, who knew
To choose his time, stood firm, then instant
flung
Him off, and scaped their purpose. Much did
rue
The demons, whom their common error stung ;
But he the most, who caused so foul defeat,
And cried, “ I have thee,” while for flight he
sprung.
But nought availed him, for his wings, though fleet,
Were slow to match suspicion. One took leap
Downwards, and one returning upward beat

The breasted air. None otherwise the deep
Some mallard cleaves, from falcon diving quick:
She faint and angered up the air doth sweep.
Close followed Calcabrina, whom the trick
Enraged ; and yet he longed the felon then
Might 'scape, a plea for scuffle thence to pick :
And as the knave vanished from our ken,
Turned with his claws his fellow-fiend to tear,
And with him grappling fluttered o'er the den.
But he, a ravenous hawk, did nothing spare
Like grapple to retort ; till 'mid the tide
That boiled below them fell the tangled pair.
Sudden its heat, and potent to divide,
But with the gluey pitch they clogged, in vain
To raise them up their sluggard pinions tried.
Then Barbariccia, grieving with his train,
Four to the distant bank directs to wend
Their flight, with tenters armed ; so might and
main
To their appointed post both sides descend,
And toward the limed ones, now baking long
Inside that crust, their helpful hooks pretend.
Embarrassed thus we left the demon throng.

CANTO XXIII.

ARGUMENT.—*Pursuit of the Poets by the Demons—Sixth Pouch—Punishment of Hypocrites—Fratelli Godenti of Bologna—Caiaphas.*

SILENT, alone, unaccompanied, our feet
We moved, my guide before and I behind,
As walk the ¹Friars Minor through the street.
The present quarrel had my thought inclined
Pensive to meditate on Esop's fable,
How once ²the Frog to drown the Rat designed.
Not ³*mo* with *issa* more were comparable,
Than with the demons they, if linked aright
Their outset and their end in memory's table :
And as from thought bursts other thought to light,
So of my first imagination born
Came there a second, doubling my first affright.
For thus I reasoned : " These by us have scorn,
Have loss and mock endured enough to fill
Their hearts, I trow, with bitterness, and torn

By rage to whet the malice of their will,
More fell behind us shall their hunt be led,
Than hound's upon the hare he mouths to kill."
I felt my hairs stand up upon my head
With terror, while I backward on our rear
Stood glancing : "If thou hasten not," I said,
"To hide thyself and me, master, I fear
Those Evil-pawed : e'en now they dog our ways :
My phantasy so works, I feel them here."
"I, were I mirror-glass which lead o'erlays,"
Said he, "thine outward presence had not
shown
More quickly caught, than now my mind displays
Thy fancy's type : thy musings with mine own,
In act alike, with like aspect endued,
Mingle to shape of twain one thought alone.
If such the right side lie, our course pursued
To other pouch can thereby find descent,
So might we yet the imagined chase elude."
Ere he, thus counselling, had fully spent
His word, on outspread wing I marked their
band
No long way off come ravenously bent.
My leader seized me with like hurried hand
As mother waked by sudden noise to shun
The kindling flames she sees toward her fanned,

Who, snatching up her boy, leaves not to run;
So careless of herself, on him to think,
That raiment, save her nightgear, hath she
none.

Then, lowered from the stony border's brink,
Himself upon the pendent rock he threw
Supine, that mounding dams a farther sink.
Never through conduit-pipe so swiftly flew
Water to turn some landward mill, when more
And yet more near the ladled wheel it drew,
As ran my master on that fringing shore,
While me upon his bosom through the race,
No mere companion, but a son, he bore.
Hardly his feet the pavement of that base
Had touched—above us on the brow were come
Our keen pursuers: yet we gave no place
To fear; for highest Providence their home
In the fifth moat ordained, to keep its bound,
But gave no more—beyond they must not roam.
Deep in this pouch a painted tribe we found,
That moaning, and with faint and jaded mien,
Dragged along, step by step, their dull, slow
round.
Cloaks had they all, with drooping cowls that lean
To shade the eyes, each shapen by the law
Of those that worn by 'Còlogne's monks are
seen.

Their gilded outside dazzled him who saw,
But, lined with lead, so heavily did press,
Compared to them were ⁵Frederic's but of straw.
O mantle of eternal weariness !
Turned to the leftward still, we walked in rank
With these, and listened to their deep distress;
But the tired people whom that burden sank
Paced on so leisurely, 'twas ours to change
For new companions often as our flank
We stirred. Then I besought him: "Give to
range
Thine eyes, still moving round, and find us there
Sufferer whose name or deeds shall not be
strange."
And one, that of the Tuscan tongue was ware,
Cried from behind us: "Slacken of your speed,
Ye that so rapidly through the murk air
Are running: what thou askest to areed
Is haply mine." My leader turning, bade
"Await him here; then at his pace proceed."
I stopped, and saw a pair, whose face pourtrayed
Much inward haste to me to make advance,
But still their load and straitened path delayed.
Arrived at length, on me with eyes askance
They looked, nor uttered word,—then looked
again,
And with themselves, exchanging mutual glance,

Thus communed : " Yonder, by his windpipe's
strain,

Yet lives ; if dead, what privilege have they
To go uncovered of our ponderous train ?"

Then thus to me : " Tuscan, who findest way
To our sad college, hypocrites accurst,
Be not disdainful who thou art to say."

" In the great city was I born and nurst,"
I said, " that crowneth Arno's gentle flow,
And wear the body which I wore at first.

But who are ye, from whom so bitter woe
I trace distilled in tear-drops down the cheek ?
What torment yours to feed so fierce a glow?"

" Our orange cloaks"—did one in answer speak,
" Hang with lead so encumbered, 'tis their
weight

Compels the ⁶shouldering balance thus to creak.

We, ⁷ Joyous Brethren of Bologna late,
I ⁸ Catalano, Loderingo he

Was named, together chosen of thy state,

As man without colleàgue is wont to be,

Conservers of her peace, and of what sort

We were, Gardingo's street gives yet to see."

" Brethren, your crimes—" began I, and broke
short

My word, for on the ground ⁹one crucified
With triple stake surprised me. All distort

He, when he glimpsed me, struggled as to hide,
And stuffed his waving beard with many a sigh:
While the friar Catalan, who him espied,
Said, "Yon transpierced that arrests thine eye
Counselled the Pharisees, 'twere well bestowed
That one man for the people's sins should die.
Now naked as thou seest, athwart the road
He stretches, and his doom, whoever cross,
To prove the first how heavy weighs his load.
By selfsame torment racked upon the fosse
Lies his wife's father, lie the rest who, met
In council, sowed the seed of Judah's loss."
Then saw I Virgil's eyes in wonder set
On that vile outcast, who, so deeply shamed,
Endured his cross in Hell's eternal pit.
He looked, then questioning the friar, exclaimed,
"If on the right hand any pass diverge,
Please you declare it, so ye may unblamed
Direct our feet to where we shall emerge
Together, freed from those black angels' wrath,
Who rushed to stop our entrance in this gurge."
He answered, "Nearer than thy hope, a path
Of rock, that from the giant circle down
Goes shelving, all these grisly trenches hath
O'erarching bridged—this only doth not crown,
But parts abrupt. Ye shall the ruins climb,
Where sidelong piled upon the deep they frown."

With head inclined my leader stood brief time,
Then thus : " False reckoning made our cer-
tifier,

That hooks the sinners yonder in the slime."

" I in ¹⁰Bologna's school—" rejoined the friar,

" Much heard of Satan's vices; there I learned
Father of lies he is, himself arch-liar."

Anon my chief, whose troubled aspect burned

With touch of anger, onward striding moved,

And from those heavy-mantled souls I turned,

Following the impress of the feet beloved.

CANTO XXIV.

ARGUMENT.—*The Poets recover their footing on the Bridge of the Seventh Pouch—Punishment of Robbers—Wonderful Transformation—Prophecy of Vanni Fucci.*

WHEN yet the year is infant, and the sun
Tempers his hair in dank ¹Aquarius' gloom,
And now the nights to halve with daylight run,
While o'er the ground the dew-frost doth assume
Her ²sister's imaged white, nor long retain
Her imitative purity of plume,
Scant of his daily means, the village swain
Rises and looks abroad, and whitened o'er
Sees all the champaign round him; thence
again,
Smiting his thigh, goes home, and plaineth sore
Now hither turned, now thither, what to do
Unknowing, restless wretch : then smiles once
more,

And rallies hope, to see creation's hue
 Changed in a passing hour; that forth to
 graze
 With switch in hand he drives his flock anew;
None otherwise my guide with blank amaze
 Chilled me, when I beheld his troubled mien;
 As quick the plaster on the sore he lays:
For when we came the broken arch between,
 He turned upon me beaming that sweet smile
 Which I had early by the hill-foot seen.
Silent he counselled with himself awhile,
 Then oped his arms, and caught me to his
 breast;
 But first considered well the ruined pile.
And like the man that, to his work address,
 Takes count, and ever seems to look with
 care
 Beyond him, thus up one rock's ragged crest
He lifting me, of other crag was ware,
 And "Clamber next up yonder mass," he said,
 " But first assay, how firm thy weight to bear."
No pathway this for sinner cloaked in lead;
 For hardly, I uphoisted, he so light,
 From hold to upper hold our climbing sped:
And were it not, that inward precinct's height
 Less than its fellow reared the circling wall,
 Of him I know not—I had sunk outright.

But forasmuch as Malebolge all
Slope to that lowest well-mouth ever bends,
To each inclining trench it must befall
That one side shoulders up, and one descends.
So, mounting, to the point at length we strained,
Whence the last rock breaks sudden off, and
ends.
I reached it ; but so utterly were drained
My lungs of breath, I could no farther go,
But sat me down, the causeway once attained.
“Rouse thee,” my master urged, “ ’tis time to
throw
This lethargy aside ; who dozing lies
’Tween coverlet and feathers, ne’er shall know
Renown, and without her who wastes and dies,
Leaves of himself like trace on earth behind,
As foam on wave, or vapour on the skies.
Up then ; o’ercome thy breathlessness by mind ;
To win the battle mind shall never fail,
If by her own dull body’s weight declined
She faint not. ³Longer stair have we to scale,
And, those surmounting, little yet have done ;
Prove thou by deed how much my words avail.”
Instant I raised me up, and showed as one
Of better breath than inwardly I found ;
“ My strength, my heart,” I cried, “ are good :
lead on.”

Our path we wended up the shelfy mound,
Where rugged, strait, and difficult, it reared
Far steeper pitch than other moat had crowned.
Still talking, lest my feebleness appeared,
I went, and lo ! unsuitable to frame
In words, a voice rose from the pit we neared.
It uttered—what I know not, though I came
Where now the curving back the ditch doth
span ;

But whoso spake, with anger seemed to flame.
I had bent downward, but the depth to scan
Its darkness to my living eyes denied ;
Wherefore—" Approach thee, master," I began,

" To yonder ring, then drop we down the side ;
For as I listen here, nor word discern,
So gaze I down, but shape have none described."

And he : " Nought else of answer I return,
Save to fulfil ; for wishes ever should,
When formed in honour, mute performance
earn."

From the bridge-head we thus descent made
good,
That crosswise joins the eighth impaling
brink,
Whence visible to me that hell-pouch stood :

And such the dreadful heap within the sink
Of serpents I beheld—kinds so diverse,
Their memory yet compels my blood to shrink.
Not more could Libya with her sands rehearse ;
Though ‘puffsnake, dartsnake, watersnake, she
boast,
With Amphisbænas Cenchris’ speckled curse,
Of living pestilence so baleful host
Displayed she never, with all Ethiop land
Combined, and all that shapes the Red Sea
coast.
Amid this fell and most pernicious band
Ran frightened naked ones—hopeless their lot,
Nor lurking-hole nor ⁵heliotrope at hand.
Tied were their arms behind with snakes that
shot
Of head and tail alike the venom sting
Through the cleft loins, then twined in front a
knot.
Lo ! suddenly a viper darts to cling,
Transfixing one who by our border passed,
Where, with the shoulders knit, the neck doth
spring.
Not *O* nor *I* were ever writ so fast
As he took fire, and burned, and crumbling
prone
Upon his place, must needs become at last

All ashes. Wasted thus on earth and strown,
Those ashes, gathering ere they yet grew
cold,

Retook their former shape themselves alone.
So have the mighty wise admiring told,
A second self the dying Phoenix breeds,
When o'er the first five hundred years have
rolled.

Her life, which never blade nor herbage feeds,
From incense' and amomum's tear she draws,
And myrrh and nard her funeral swathing-
weeds.

Like him who, falling, witteth not the cause,
Or to the ground by force of demon torn,
Or of obstruction seized, whose icy laws
Bind all the man; when rising thence forlorn
He glares on all around him, with his woes
Aghast, and choking anguish he hath borne,
And gazing sighs: e'en such the sinner rose.
Justice of God, ah ! how severe art thou
That hurlest vengeance in such hail of blows !
My leader bade him straight his name avow,
Who answered, " In this deadly-throated glen
Rained out of Tuscany I fell but now.
The bestial life I loved, and not of men,
Mule as I was, late 'Vanni Fucci named,
The Beast: Pistoia made me worthy den."

“Bid him not think to banter,” I exclaimed,
“And ask what villainy could thus ⁷abase ;
A man of blood I knew him, choler-blamed.”
The sinner heard, nor paltered, but his face,
And with his face his mind upon me bent,
Blushing with conscience of his foul disgrace.
“That thou hast caught me here, I more lament,”
He said, “in misery such as greets thine eye,
Than when my soul from other life was rent.
But, for thy question I may not deny,
My thievish fingers earned so deep a cell,
When its fair garnish from the sacristy
They stole, and guilt on ⁸other falsely fell.
But lest the view thine after-day should cheer,
When haply passed from gloomy tracts of hell;
To mine announcement ope thine ears and hear.
⁹Of her Black sons Pistoia thins her first :
In Florence next new modes, new folk appear :
Then Mars a fog, in Valdimagra nurst,
Draws up that, wrapt in turbulent array
Of clouds, with hostile tempest’s bitter burst
Upon Picenian field must clash in fray.
The opposing storm so sudden shall it break,
That every White shall stricken rue the day :
Which I foretel in hope thine heart will ache.”

CANTO XXV.

ARGUMENT.—*Seventh Pouch continued—Apparition of the Centaur Cacus—Encounter with three Florentine spirits, two of whom undergo a strange metamorphosis.*

THE plunderer ceased, and twisting both his
thumbs

Between the fingers, tossed his hands on high,
Crying, "Take mine homage, God, to thee
it comes!"

Thenceforth befriended me the serpent fry,
For one around his neck that moment twined,
As it had said, "None other word will I
From him;" a second bound his arms behind,
In front so tightly riveting, no room
Barely to stir those members might he find.
Pistoia!—Oh! Pistoia, why not doom
Thyself to make thine ashes,—none to dwell
In thee for ever?—so ¹thy seed presume

In growing guilt ! Through all the depths of
Hell,

Her darkest orbs, ne'er found I soul so proud
To God ; no, not from Theban walls ² who fell.

Speechless he fled, and lo ! from out the crowd
A Centaur scouring by with frantic storm,
" Where, where is he, the sour one ? " shouted
loud.

³ Maremma ne'er, I trow, so plenteous swarm
Of vipers bred, as o'er his haunch that shape
Displayed, to where begins our human form.
Cresting the shoulders couched behind the nape
A dragon, open-winged his prey to take,
Which who confronts, may burning not escape.

" That form is Cacus "—thus my master spake—

" ⁴ Under the rock in Aventine of blood
Full many a time he poured a purple lake.
Not his to follow 'mid the kindred brood ;
So foul his craft the goodly herd to steal,
That grazing strayed to his bad neighbourhood ;
Whence in those crooked ways he ceased to deal
Beneath the Herculean club, which struck
perchance

Its hundred blows, ⁵ nor ten were his to feel."
While thus my guide discoursed, both he askance
Darted, and under us three spirits came,
Of whom my guide nor I the swift advance

Perceived, till "Who are ye?" they 'gan exclaim;
And, hearing, we our half-told story checked,
On them to bend attention all our aim.

I recognized them not; but like effect
Ensued as oft ensueth, chance the bringer,
That I from one should other's name collect,
Who thus enquired: "Where yet can 'Cianfa
linger?"

To stay my guide in silence here, I heave
And press 'twixt nose and chin the warning
finger.

If, reader, thou should'st tardily receive
What now I tell, it might not much surprise,
When I, who saw it, scarce myself believe.
While yet on them I fix my staring eyes,
Behold! a reptile with six feet hath sprung
Fastening on one, that front to front applies.
With middle feet around the paunch it clung,
His arms it grappled with the foremost two,
Then either cheek with poisoned fanglets stung.
Its rearward feet sprawled o'er his thighs, and
through
Their fork its penetrative tail was thrown,
Which up his reins behind it curling drew.
Not bearded ivy round the tree hath grown
Rooting so close, as that fell worm between
Another's limbs implicit writhed its own.

Then they, as both of heated wax had been,
Commingling fused in one, their colours blent ;
What either were, in neither now was seen.
Thus upward aye before the kindling sent
A tinge of brown doth o'er the ⁷ paper run,
Its blackness yet to be, its white all spent.
Those other two, beholding what was done,
Cried each, " Ah me ! ⁸ Agnello, change how
dread
Transforms thee ! Lo ! thou art nor two nor
one."
Already joined, of two became one head,
While doubled lineaments, of diverse mould,
One single face, where both were lost, o'erspread.
The arms, a pair, had sinewed lines fourfold ;
The thighs, the legs, the belly, and the chest
Turned members such as man doth ne'er behold.
There, all original aspect suppress,
That warped image both and neither seemed ;
And such to crawl its laggard step addressed.
As lizard, when the dogstar's day hath beamed
Corrosive fires, if o'er the road his track
To change his hedgerow, lightning-like hath
gleamed,
Such toward those others' midribs for attack
⁹ A dwarfish serpent shot, inflamed with heat,
Like grain of pepper livid all and black :

And pierced the part in one, where first the meat
 That feeds our embryo life hath channel sought;
 Then, falling, laid it lengthways at his feet.

Thereon the wounded looked, nor uttered aught,
 But heaved a weary yawn, his feet fast set,
 As one whom sleep or fever-fit had caught.

While mutually they gaze, a smoky jet
 The wound of one, the other's mouth expels,
 In volumed strength, till smoke with smoke
 hath met.

Henceforth be ¹⁰Lucan silent, where he tells
 Nasidius' and Sabellus' dismal lot,
 And list how far my marvel's flight excels:

Be Ovid's ¹¹Cadmus, ¹²Arethuse forgot;
 If him to serpent, her to limpid spring
 His poet power convert, I envy not;

For ne'er did he two shifting natures sing,
 Placed front to front, whose forms without a
 pause

Their substances to counterchange should bring.
 These chimed in strict response, such their
 laws,

That while his tail the serpent cleaves in twain,
 Opening a fork, the wounded closer draws
 His feet; then legs and thighs so intervein
 Each other's flesh, they rapidly discard
 Token or trace that made their joining plain.

Fast as the human shape was yonder marred,
The cloven tail assumed it, and the skin
To softness turned, as yonder skin grew hard.
I saw the arms their armpits shrink within,
While the two reptile feet, that stunted were,
What length those others lost did gradual win.
Them followed soon the hinder crawling pair,
Together twined to form what man conceals;
And two for one the wretched changeling bare:
Then, while to each the veiling smokewreath deals
New colour, and o'er one part gives to grow
Such hair as off the rival's feet it peels,
The one rose up a man, the other low
Fell grovelling: yet those impious lamps of
sight
Shift not their gaze, that watches each forego
His former visage. He who stood upright,
The exuberant flesh his temples gathering
round,
Thrust from the flattened cheeks two ears to
light.
Of what remained, nor backward inlet found,
The surplus did with nose his front adorn,
And either lip with natural fulness crowned.
But he who lay, his muzzle sharper worn
Shoots forward, and each ear within the cheek
Involving buries, as the snail her horn.

His tongue, united erst and apt to speak,
Now sunders, as that other tongue makes
whole
Its forky cleavage, and the fuming reek
Goes forth no more. The brute-embodied soul
Flees hissing through the dungeon, whom the
man
Pursuing opes the slaving lips to roll
Their spluttered speech : thence to his mate
began,
The new-felt shoulders turned : "I ¹³ Buoso
chuse
To run the reptile path where late I ran."
By such transfigurements to gain and lose
Saw I the seventh hold's ballast ; and if here
Wanders my pen, let novelty excuse.
And grant, mine eyes, confounded, saw not clear
Their objects, and dismay my spirit smote,
Yet not so close each hilding knave his cheer
Kept as he fled me, but I well might note
¹⁴ Puccio Sciancato, on whom alone of three,
Companions erst who came, no change was
wrought :
The last was ¹⁵ one, Gavillè, mourned by thee.

CANTO XXVI.

ARGUMENT.—*Eighth Pouch—Punishment of False Counsellors—Spirits of Ulysses and Diomed, the former of whom relates the manner of his own death.*

Joy, Florence, joy ! thou art so mighty grown,
Thy pinions wave at will o'er sea and land,
And wide o'er Hell itself thy name is known.
¹ Five such I found amid the robber band
Thy citizens, I shame me for the sight ;
Nor thou, so childed, shalt the higher stand
In honour. But if ²dreams at dawning light
Prove sooth, the pang thou speedily must know,
Which ³Prato's longings, if none else, invite:
Not immature, though now 'twere struck, the blow;
And since it must be, better now it were,
Than heavier fall, as I the older grow.
Anon we parted thence, and up the stair,
By which the loose-piled crags descent had
given,
My guide remounting, me with friendly care

Drew after : whence 'mid rocks and splinters riven
Had we our solitary path in vain
Essayed, unless both hand and foot had striven.
Then was I pained, and yet reviv'd the pain,
My thoughts advertent what I there espied,
And curb my genius with unwonted rein ;
Lest, if it wanton wild, nor virtue guide,
What my kind star, or better source bestows,
I from myself be enviously denied.
As villager who lays him for repose
On upland slope, in time when least concealed
He holds his face, who doth our world disclose,
What hour the day-fly to the gnat must yield,
Sees countless glowworms sparkling down the
dell,
Where he or gathers grapes or ploughs a field ;
With flames as many that eighth pouch of Hell
Was gleaming all—where I the bridge o'erhung,
Searching that utmost depth, I marked them
well.
And as 'whom bears avenged of mocking tongue
Beheld Elijah rapt in car of fire,
When up the steep of heaven its horses sprung,
Till vainly might his straining eyes aspire
Aught to distinguish but the radiant fold,
Like lessening cloud that higher floats and
higher ;

So through the trenched throat each onward rolled
Self-moving: none its human theft betrays,
Though every flame a stolen sinner hold.

I, whom mine eagerness to look o'ersways
Beyond the reef, save that a crag I caught,
Had fallen without a thrust. Mine earnest
gaze

My leader noting told: "These fires are fraught
With each a soul, that round itself hath twined
The flame it suffers." "Surer now my thought,
Master," said I, "to hear thee; yet my mind
Already deemed it thus, and fancy guided
To ask already, whom the curse consigned
To yonder fire, that cometh so divided
At top, as if from ⁵that funereal pile,
Where burned the Theban brothers, it had
glided."

"Here torment racks," he said, "the twins of
guile,

⁶Ulysses and his Diomed: thus they speed
Together linked to vengeance, as erewhile
To wrath: within their flame they groan in meed
Of the famed horse, whose ambush oped a gate
To usher forth the noble Roman seed.

There, too, the craft, which o'er Achilles' fate
Makes dead ⁷Deidamia yet lament,
The ⁸stolen Palladium there is expiate."

"If they within those living embers pent
May speak," I said, "Master, I greatly pray
And pray again, until my prayer content
As would a thousand—give me not denay,
But wait the coming of that horned flame :
See how desire mine eager limbs doth weigh
Toward it." "Thy prayer," he answered, "well
may claim
Abundant praise : I make the entreaty mine ;
Only thy tongue do thou to silence frame ;
And since thy mind I perfectly divine,
Leave me to commune, lest, ⁹for they were
Greek,
Thy ruder speech indignant they decline."
Then as the flame approached its double peak
To where my guide saw fitting time and place,
Words ordered like to these I heard him speak.
"Ye that are twain within one fire's embrace,
If I of you deserved, as once a friend—
If I of you deserved or greater grace
Or less, when I the lofty verses penned
Above, depart not hence till one declare
Where he, the self-abandoned, sought his
end."
The larger horn that flame of ages bare
With murmuring sound anon began to shake,
Like one that labours with the impressive air:

Then, as it were the very tongue that spake,
The summit vibrating with gentle wave
Poured out a voice of answer : " When I brake
From Circe's arms, that hid me as my grave,
¹⁰More than a year content with her to toy
¹¹Hard by Caieta, or e'er Æneas gave
That name ; nor sweet remembrance of my boy,
Nor old Laertes' grief, nor debt of love,
Which owed Penelope the arrear of joy,
Could quench my burning zeal, that inly strove,
And bade the wisdom of the world explore,
And human vices, human worth to prove.
I tried the deep and open sea once more
With but one vessel, and the faithful few
That ne'er forsook their chieftain. Either
shore
Far as the Spanish confine met my view ;
Marocco's and Sardinia's wave I ploughed,
And ¹²the islands' that sea girdles. But my
crew
And I were clogged with tardiness, and bowed
By age, when toward the straitened jaws we
steered,
Where Hercules, in sign of none allowed
To pass, his ¹³limitary marks had reared.
I venturous, on my right hand left Seville,
And on my left ere now had ¹⁴Ceuta cleared.

‘Brothers,’ I reasoned, ‘ye that struggling still
Through myriad perils the far west have won,
To such brief remnant as awaits to fill
Your senses’ vigil, ere their work be done,
Do not experience of that world refuse,
Which, yet unpeopled, hides behind the sun.
Bethink you of your birth-rank and its dues :
Ye were not thus for brutish life endured,
But Virtue’s path and Learning’s born to
chuse.’

Scant was my pleading, yet so well renewed
My sharpened comrades in their zeal to try,
Hardly had I restrained them of their mood
Thenceforth ; and, veering ’neath the morning’s
eye

Our stern, while ever toward the left we sped,
Our oars for wings in unwise flight we ply.
Now other pole, with all his stars o’erhead,
I saw by night, our own so far deprest,
He might not rouse him from his watery bed.
The light which ¹⁵under doth the Moon invest,
Five times relumed, as oft had emptied been,
Since we to cross that unsailed ocean’s breast
Entered ; when darkling from the space between
A mountain showed, gigantic, that to scale
So high, methought, mine eyes had never
seen.

Gladness was ours—and quickly turned to wail,
When from that new found earth a whirlwind
springs
Our vessel's forepart sudden to assail :
Thrice round and round, bark, waves, and all it
swings ;
At the fourth shock (so Other willed to be),
The stern aloft, the prow it downward flings,
Till o'er us closed again the gluttoned sea."

CANTO XXVII.

ARGUMENT.—*Eighth Pouch continued—Count Guido di Montefeltro receives from Dante news of Romagna, and in return describes the cause of his own condemnation to this place.*

Now rose the flame erect, and ceased to vent
Its wavy words ; now hastened to retire,
Even as the gentle poet gave consent.
When lo ! behind the first a second fire,
Tumultuous sound exploding, turned our eyes
In admiration toward its cresting spire.
As that ¹ Sicilian Bull, whose bellowed cries
Gave out his moan the first, (due recompense)
Who plied his artist file to organize
The vocal shape, with roarings so intense
Echoed the sufferer's voice—it seemed the
frame,
Brass though it were, of every pang took sense ;
Thus here the melancholy words became
At first, while pass nor outlet had they none,
The proper language of the crackling flame ;

But when at length in upward rush they won
The point, and caused to vibrate with the play
His tongue imparted as their flow begun ;
“ O thou toward whom I level ”—heard we say,
“ My voice ; who late in tones of Lombardy
Criedst, ‘ No more I chafe thee, go thy way ;’
If of my coming slow I chance to be,
Let it not irk thee communing to halt ;
Behold me burning, and it irks not me.
If thou but newly down Hell’s sightless vault
Art fallen from that sweet Latin land afar,
Whereon I charge the burden of my fault,
Say, have Romagna’s children peace or war ?
For I ²from hills between Urbino sprung
And those where Tiber doth his flood unbar.”
With downward bend attentive yet I hung,
When my kind leader touched me on the side,
Saying, “ This soul is Latin ; make thy tongue
Speak for us both.” And I forthwith replied,
Nor needed pause, mine answer all prepared,
But thus commenced : “ Spirit, that here dost
hide,
Thine own Romagna was not, is not spared
The war which hath her tyrants’ heart imbued ;
But open strife was none when forth I fared.
Ravenna stands as she long years hath stood,
And there ³Polenta’s eagle, Cervia’s plain
With puissant wings enfolding, sits to brood :

⁴ Her, who did erst the lengthened fight maintain,
 And heaped the death-pile red with Frankish
 gore,

The ⁵ Vert fangs now to vassalage constrain :
 The ⁶ mastives old and young, Verrucchio bore,
 Who in their lawless rule ⁷ Montagna slew,
 Make their teeth augres where they wont of
 yore :

The ⁸ Lion's whelp from snow-white lair hath two—
 Lamone's and Santerno's towns—at will,
 And, as the seasons change, holds faction new :

⁹ Whose side the Savio laveth, as 'tween hill
 And level plain she rises, thus her state
 'Twixt tyranny and freedom wavers still.

Now, I implore thee, who thou art relate,
 Nor harder be than other to afford
 Reply ; so may thy glory cope with fate
 On upper earth." Awhile the balefire roared
 In his own fashion; then the sharp point quaking
 Moved to and fro, till such the breath it poured :

" ¹⁰ Could I believe I were mine answer making
 To one that ever should his path retrace
 Back to the world, this flame no more were
 shaken ;

But since none living from our dismal place
 Hath e'er remounted, if I hear the truth,
 I give thee answer, fearless of disgrace.

I was a man of arms ; my sins of youth

I thought to cleanse with rope of ¹¹ Cordelier,
And that my thought had surely turned to
sooth :

But the ¹²great pontiff (evil be his cheer !)

Did to revive my former crimes persuade,
And how and wherefore thou anon shalt
hear.

While I the shape in bones and flesh arrayed
Wore which my mother gave, the foxes style
More than the lion's all mine acts betrayed.

The covert ways—the subtleties of guile—

I knew them all, and soon the world around
Rung with my fame, how versed in every wile.

When now in ripeness of mine age I found

That I had reached the term, wherein to reef
The sail, and coil the tackling, all are bound,

What late had been my pleasure, now was grief.

In penitence and shrift my help I planned :

Ah wretch ! nor had it failed me : but the chief
Of our new Pharisees—with war on hand

Hard by the gates of Lateran, nor fought
With Saracenic, nor with Jewish band,

For all were ¹³Christian foes whose hurt he wrought;
Nor conquering arm from ¹⁴Acre's wall was
there,

Nor trafficker, the Soldan's realm who sought—

His highest place, the sacred vows he bare,
 He nought regarded, nor in me the line
 That wont to gird with leanness all who wear :

But from ¹⁵ Soracte's cave as Constantine
 Silvester's hand medicinal desired
 To heal his taint of leprosy, ¹⁶so mine
 To heal his own proud fever *he* required ;
 Then counsel asked : nor I my silence broke,
 But deemed his words by drunkenness inspired.
 ' Let not thine heart suspect,' again he spoke,
 ' Here I assoil thee—be ¹⁷Præneste's towers
 O'erthrown, and teach me thou to deal the
 stroke :

Heaven-gates to open and to shut is ours ;
 For, well thou wottest, two the precious keys,
 But, ¹⁸who last held them, lightly prized their
 powers.'

Thus he did urge me with momentous pleas
 My silence, as the worser part, to quit ;
 And I : ' O Father, since thy laver frees
 From stain of guilt which I must now commit,
¹⁹ *Long promises with short performance crown,*
 And thou triumphant in thy chair shalt sit.'
 To fetch me when I died came Francis down ;
 But one of those black Cherubim controlled,
 And cried, ' Forbear, nor wrong me of mine
 own.

He must below, and 'mid my slaves enrolled
Assume the place his traitorous counsel owes,
Since when his hair with ready clutch I hold.
Who not repents him, no remission knows,
Nor thing repented can withal be willed,
For laws of contradiction this oppose.'
Me miserable ! how were my heartstrings thrilled,
When, seizing, thus he taunted : 'Thou per-
haps
Didst ne'er imagine I was logic-skilled ;'
Then bore me straight to Minos. He inwraps
His iron back eight times, and while with bite
Of rabid vengeance at the eighth he snaps
His tail, determines : ' This man is by right
The furtive fire's : ' whence to perdition borne
I move so clad, and rankle with despite."
His story thus accomplished, as forlorn,
The flame with signs of anguish took his leave,
Tossing and writhing oft the taper horn.
Onward my guide and I our limbs upheave
O'er the slope reef, to arch that hath bestrode
A farther moat, where all their fee receive,
²⁰ Who, discomposing, yet amass their load.

CANTO XXVIII.

ARGUMENT. — *Ninth Pouch — Punishment of Schismatics and Causers of Divisions—Mahomet—Pier di Medicina—Bertrand de Born.*

Who might recount, though in untrammelled
 prose,
And that, repeating, oft he told the tale,
The blood and ghastly wounds which now
 arose
Before mine eyes? Sure every tongue should fail,
 By reason of our speech, and of the mind
Whose puny faculties might nought avail
Such theme to compass. Were that host combined
 That whilome trod ¹Apulia's fated soil,
When o'er the spilth of native blood she pined,
From Roman armies and the lengthened toil
Of war, which made (as Livy's pen renowned
For truth indites) of rings so noble spoil,

With that which felt the smarts of many a wound,
Reluctant 'gainst the ²Norman Guiscard's
might;

And them whose bleaching bones yet heap the
ground

At ³Ceperan, where each Apulian light

And lying proved; and ⁴where the old Alard,
Unarmed, of Tagliacozzo won the fight;

And *this* of member pierced, *that*, lopt and shared
Should make display,—'twere nothing, with the
tide

Of loathly shapes in that ninth pouch compared.

No cask, from loss of centre-board or side

Its bottom burst, such leak had ever sprung,

As one from chin to baser vent I spied

Disparted: 'tween the legs his entrails hung,

And with his liver that foul sack was shown,

Which turns the swallowed nutriment to dung.

While I mine whole attent on him alone

Fasten, he looked, and with his hands laid bare

His breast, and cried: "See how I rend mine
own!

What mangling, see, is Mahomet's to share!

Before me groaning ⁵Ali—from the chin

His visage cloven to the frontal hair.

And all the rest, thou findest here within,

The seeds of scandal and of schism erewhile

Lived to diffuse; and, sundered thus, their sin

Atone. To cleave us in so ruthless style
A demon lurks behind, whose keen-set blade
Repeats his stroke on each of yonder file,
When we the doleful highway's round have made ;
For, ere we prove again his trenchant edge,
Closed are our gashes, and with skin o'erlaid.
But who art thou that haltest on the ledge
In stupid muse, as loth to seek the pains
To which thy crimes adjudicate and pledge
The lingering spirit ?" "Him nor death en-
chains,"

My master answered, "nor the deed of ill
Hurls to his torment ; but to me pertains
The cup of his experience to fulfil :
The dead to guide the living is my lot
Through hellish orbs, from deep to deeper still.
And these my words are truth." Upon the spot
A hundred, hearing him, to eye me stood,
And in their wonder all their pangs forgot.
"Go, warn the 'Friar Dolcino that with food
He arm himself (for thou perhaps the sun
Shalt soon revisit), if he deem not good
Hither to join me quickly : lest, undone
By strait of snows, he to Novara yield
A victory that else were hardly won."
This word to me while Mahomet revealed,
He held one foot suspense, in act to move,
And, thus departing, pressed it on the field.

Another thence, for whom the fiend had clove
His throat across, and lopt the nose from under
The bleeding eyebrows, and who bore above
One ear alone, tarrying to gaze with wonder
Amid his fellows, first of all the throng
His crimsoned windpipe oped for speech asunder;

And said : " O uncondemned for aught of wrong!
Whom I in Latin land—if not in vain
I guess, deceived by likeness all too strong—
Have seen ; shouldst thou review the gentle plain
That from ⁷ Vercelli falls to Marcabo,
Of ⁸ Pier di Medicina think again,
And cause the best in ⁹ Fano both to know—
To ¹⁰ Messer Guy, to Angiolello say,
Unless our foresight mocks us here below,
When sailing near Catholica shall they,
By treason tied in sacks and hoisted o'er
Their vessel, drown, a felon tyrant's prey.
Never ¹¹ 'tween Cyprus' and Majorca's shore
Did Neptune witness crime so deep in dye,
From pirate-horde, or Argive host of yore.
That traitorous, who sees with but one eye,
And holds the country, ¹² one were well agreed
Himself had never seen, who standeth by,
Shall summon them for conference, then speed
Their matters so, that to ¹³ Focara's breeze
Nor vow nor prayer for convoy shall they need."

“Declare,” I said, “and show for whom of these
 Seeing hath proved so bitter, if thou seek
 That I, reporting thee to earth, should ease
 Thy grief.” He heard, then to a comrade’s cheek
 Applied his hand, and spread the mouth to
 view,

Crying : “’Tis this one, and he doth not speak.

¹⁴ This was the exile who the doubt o’erthrew
 In Cæsar’s bosom, venturing to uphold,
Delay the once-prepared must ever rue.”

Alas ! how abject here and craven-souled,
 His tongue from out the yawning gullet cleft,
 Did Curio seem, that was of speech so bold !
 And one that went of either hand bereft,
 In the black air, till blood-drops soiled his face,
 Lifting the gory stumps his maim had left,
 Cried : “Let thy memory ¹⁵ Mosca, too, retrace,
 Who to my cost advised : *Thing done hath head.*
 A seed whence evil to the Tuscan race—”

“And to thine house,” I added, “death was bred.”
 Whereat, like crazy wretch of sense forsook,
 He, grief on grief accumulating, fled.

But I, remaining on their crowd to look,
 Beheld a thing, the which for very fear
 To tell without more proof I might not brook,
 If conscience, good companion, were not near
 To reassure, who sets the spirit free
 Within the hauberk of a breast sincere.

Certes I saw, and yet I seem to see,
A bust without the head go moving thus,
As moved the rest of that sad company :
And by its hairs the lopt head pendulous
It lantern-fashion with one hand sustained,
Which sighed, " Ah ! woe is me !" and glared
on us.

So, as a lamp to light himself constrained,
There two in one, and one in two appears ;
He knows how this might be, Who so ordained.
Now fronting the bridge-foot, aloft he rears
Arm, head and all, that nearer to our line
His words more plainly might salute our ears ;
Which were : " See thou my troublous curse ; 'tis
thine

Yet breathing 'mid the dead to make resort ;
See thou if any plague can match with mine.
And know me—so thou shalt my state report—
Bertrand de Born, who did the ¹⁶ Younger King
With vile instilments banefully exhort.
'Twixt sire and son I caused rebellion spring ;
Not more Achitophel's malignant dart
Did the lost Absalom 'gainst David sting.
Because I wrought so joined ones to part,
Myself my brain must parted bear, alas !
From its own source within this trunk, my heart.
On me retaliation thus doth pass."

CANTO XXIX.


ARGUMENT.—*Dante sees his kinsman, Geri del Bello—Tenth Pouch—Punishment of the Alchymists—Griffolino and Capocchio.*

THE numerous people and the varied harms
Did so my swimming eyes intoxicate,
That e'en to linger there and weep had charms.
But Virgil asked : "Why gazing dost thou wait ?
Why rest thine eyes below, as if they felt
Supportance from the sad shades mutilate ?
Not thus i' the other pouches hast thou dealt ;
And think, if thou to count their number mean,
Full two and twenty miles this valley's belt.
The moon already 'neath our feet her sheen
Conceals, the time grows short to us conceded,
And other sight expects thee, yet unseen."
Whom I that instant answered : "Hadst thou
heeded
My cause of gazing, e'en for longer stay
With thee my pardon, haply, it had pleaded."

Meantime, with me behind, his onward way
My guide resumes, while I continuing tell
My tale, and add: "Where late I made delay
Fastening mine eyes, within that hollow dell
Methinks a spirit of my blood doth plain
The crime that costs so dear in yonder hell."
Then spake the master: "Break no more in
vain
Thy thought on him: the mind attentive frame
For other mark, and let him there remain.
By the bridge-foot I saw him point and aim
His finger, threatening thee with stern intent,
And of ¹Geri del Bello caught the name.
But thou wert hampered then, and wholly bent
On him, once ²Hautfort's warden; till from
hence,
Unowned by look of thine, thy kinsman went."
"Ah! my good Lord, ³the mortal violence
Whereof he goes yet unavenged—" I said,
"—By any bound to feel with kindred sense
His shame, makes him disdainful, that he sped
From me, no word vouchsafing, as I deem;
And wakes the more my pity for him dead."
So talking came we where that rocky seam
First shows, and had revealed the neighb'ring
dale
In all its depth, if lit by stronger beam.

When as we gained that utmost cloister-pale
Of Malebolge, whence our eyes to view
Its undevout recluses might avail,
An arrow-storm of wild laments that flew,
Barbed each with pity, did so sorely gall
Mine ears, to stop them I both hands upthrew.
As were the groan, if every hospital
Of 'Valdichiana poured between July
And hot September plagues to mix with all
Maremma's and Sardinia's fens supply,
Crowding one ditch, so here ; and fume as rank
Steamed up, as wont from limbs that putrefy.
Leftward descended we to that last bank
From off the long-drawn reef; and more assured
My gaze adown the deep, more vivid sank,
Where Justice, handmaid of the Sùpreme Lord
Infallible, each false pretender's crime,
Here registered for vengeance, doth reward.
Not sadder was the sight, I ween, what time
Ægina mourned her people all infirm,—
When such malignancy the tainted clime
Breathed out, her creatures to the smallest worm
Drooped all and perished ; till the race of old
Repaired its own extinguishment by germ
Of emmets, as poetic tales uphold,—
Than was to see along that dungeon-shade
The languid ghosts in different masses rolled.

This o'er his neighbour's belly—that was laid
O'er other's shoulders—while a crawling third
In unrest o'er the dreary foot-path strayed.
Looking and listening to the sickly herd
Enervate, who to lift them power had not,
Step after step we trailed, nor uttered word.
Like pan by pan arranged to make them hot,
Each propt with other, I two sitters spied
From head to foot embossed with tetter-spot.
Nor e'er saw curry-comb so swiftly plied
Of stable-drudge for whom his master waited,
Or one that, gaping, for his pallet sighed,
As each his toothed nails incessant grated
O'er his own skin, with prurience of itch
Whose mighty rage none other help abated ;
And rent away the lazar-scabs with twitch
Of scullion's knife that, scraping, o'er the scales
Of carp, or fish with broader plates, doth hitch.
“ O thou whose fingers—” thus my leader hails
One of the twain,—“ strip off thy scaly spoil,
That ever and anon dost turn thy nails
To pincers, tell us if 'mid yonder coil
Hide any Latin ; so may each clawed hand
Eternally suffice thee for their toil.”
“ We, now so ruined seen, of Latin land
Are both,” responded one with piteous tone,
“ But who art thou of us to make demand ?”



"One," answered he, "that claim the task mine
own

This living man from steep to steep profound
To lead ; my purpose until Hell be shown."

They heard, and broke their common prop, and
round

To greet me tremulously turned, with host
Of other sprites who caught his words' rebound.

My courteous leader, all by me engrost,

Commanded : "Speak the promptings of thy
mind

To these : " whom I, so countenanced, accost :

"So let your names from memory of your kind

Never on earth to blank Oblivion steal,

But yet survive when many suns have shined ;

Tell who ye are, your lineage both reveal,

Nor let the foul and nauseous curse ye earned

Coward your tongues your fortune to conceal."

"Arezzo was my country," ⁶one returned,

"And Albert of Sienna's wrath pursued

And drove me to the stake—but why I burned

Brings me not hither : true, in jesting mood

I told him I could soar the skies : mine art

He, with much zeal and little sense endued,

Would fain be shown ; and, merely that the part

Of Dædalus I shunned, my burning sought

From one who loved him with a father's heart.

But me for the alchymy which there I wrought
Hath Minos to the lowest pouch of ten
Condemned—on him deceit availeth nought.”
And I said to the poet : “ Where again
Might people empty as the Siennese
Be found ? Far short, I trow, the French.”
But when
That other leprous heard me talk of these,
’My speech he answered : ⁸“ Stricca thence
remove,
Who knew to temper spending with degrees,
And ⁹Nicolas, that of the costly clove
The use discovered in that garden first,
Where such a seed thrives ever : ¹⁰and the
drove
’Mid whom Caccia d’Asciano flung dispersed
Vineyard and leaf ; and one, his worthy peer,
L’Abbagliato, displayed his wisdom erst.
But thou, to know who seconds thee severe
Against Sienna’s children, point on me
Thine eyes, that so my well-confronted cheer
Respond ; and thou ¹¹Capocchio’s shade wilt see,
Who did with alchymy false metals shape ;
Thou shouldst remember, if mine eyes of thee
Tell truth, how I of Nature was good ape.”

CANTO XXX.

ARGUMENT.—*Tenth Pouch continued—Punishment of Forgers and Coiners—Quarrel between Master Adam and Sinon.*

IN the old time of Juno's angry spleen
At Theban blood for ¹ Semele defiled,
Which once and more the goddess let be seen,
With such a madness ² Athamas went wild,
That when the mother of his sons he saw
Come with her load, in either hand a child,
He cried: "Spread we the nets, until I draw,
As here they pass, the lioness and her young:"
Then wide outstretched each unrelenting claw,
And him that hight Learchus grasping swung
And dashed against a rock, while ³ she to drown
Herself and other burden headlong flung.
And when the turn of fortune's wheel bowed down
The Trojan haughtiness, that wont to dare
All things, ⁴ till fate extinguished king and
crown,

Sad Hecuba, beholding with despair
Polyxena now dead, herself a slave,
And, as she doleful roamed the beach, aware
Of her loved Polydore the sport of wave,
Her wit so wrested by the dire annoy,
 ⁵With barkings of a dog essayed to rave.
But never furies or of Thebes or Troy
On tortured limbs of brute, much less of man,
Were found so savage rancour to employ,
As here I saw two naked spectres wan,
That like some chafed hog, on which the door
Of his own hogstye closes, bit and ran.
One fastened on Capocchio's neck, and tore
Its knot, then downward dragged with tusk so
grim
As caused his belly scrape the granite floor:
And the Aretine, who shook in every limb,
Said: " ⁶Gianni Schicchi's goblin maniac
Goes there, so quaint his neighbour-damned
to trim."
"Ah! may his comrade's teeth so spare thy
back,"
I answered, "as it shall not irk to say
Her name, or e'er she follow hence the track."
And he to me: "That soul of ancient day
Is sacrilegious ⁷Myrrha's, who became
Her father's love, in love's unlawful way.

She with him wrought so detestable shame,
Falsely concealing her in other's guise;
As he who runs beside her dared to frame
Himself (the lady of the stud his prize)
A false Buoso Donati—and made strong
By formal act his testament of lies.”
When that infuriate pair had passed along,
On whom mine eye was fixed, I turned it round
To view the others of that misborn throng.
There one in fashion like a lute I found,
Were but his groin dissevered from the place
Whence humankind goes forked to the ground.
Fell Hydropsy, that from the limbs doth chase
Their due proportion with her watery burst,
Which all converts amiss, till paunch and face
No longer match, his mouth unclosed with thirst
Like that which doth some hectic's lips impel,
One toward his chin, and upward one reversed.
“O ye who thread the mourning deeps of Hell
Unsubject, and I know not why, to pain,”
Said he to us, “behold and ponder well
The grief of ⁸ Master Adam. Plenteous gain
Of all I wanted living blessed me still—
One drop of water now I crave in vain !
The little brooks that, every grass-green hill
Of ⁹ Casentin to Arno's lap descending,
Make soft and cool the channelled beds they fill,

Dwell ever in my sight, not vainly blending
Their image, while more parching drought it
wakes,

Than may the sickness from this visage rending
My flesh. The obdurate justice that so rakes,

Occasion from the place where I transgressed
To rouse my sighs to fiercer tempest takes.

There is Romena, where I false impressed

A spurious mintage with the Baptist's die,

Whence of my body flames did me divest.

But might I see the villain soul of Guy,

Or Alexander's or their brother's ghost,

For ¹⁰Fonte Branda's self that sight would I

Not barter. One already swells our host,

If these who run their frantic whirl say right ;

But what avails? My fettered limbs have
lost

Their native speed : else, were I yet so light

That I in hundred years one inch made good,

I long before had crawled the path for sight

Of him amid yon misproportioned brood ;

What though of miles eleven the circuit be,

Nor less than half a mile its breadth include.

My place among so shapen family

They caused, they led me coining to impose

The florins that of dross had carats three."

And I to him : " What scrubbed pair be those
That, like to hand in winter washed, upsend
A steam, and straitened with thy right side
close ? "

" Here found I them, and never turn nor bend,"
He answered, " since I fell down yonder breach,
Gave they, nor shall give, ages without end.

One ¹¹ the lewd cause of Joseph's false impeach,
From Troy the other, ¹² Sinon, that false Greek:
Sharp fever doth so putrid steam from each
Exhale." The one, enraged to hear him speak
His name, perchance, in so disprizing sort,
Smote on the tightened paunch, his spite to
wreak,

With fist, that like a drum it gave report;
And with his arm, in semblance not less hard,
Did Master Adam on the face retort
That blow, and said, " Though by my limbs de-
barred

To move their huge unwieldy bulk, I hold
Mine arm at large, for such a work prepared."

Then answered he : " Thou hadst it not of old
So ready, when thou wentest to the fire ;
But thus and more, to counterfeit the gold."

" Thou speakest truth in this, yet wert a liar,
Nor witness bore," the dropsical replied,
" So true, when Troy of thee did truth require."

"If I spake false, and thou hast falsified
The coin," quoth Sinon, "I must here atone
One fault, thou more than any fiend beside."
"Thou perjured ! call to mind the horse thine
own,"

He of the bloated paunch rejoined, "and weep
Thy bitter curse, that all the world hath
known."

"Thou," said the Greek, "for curse as bitter keep
Tongue-splitting thirst, and rotting water pile,
As now, before thine eyes thy belly's heap."

With that the coiner : "In its wonted style
Severs thy mouth, that evil speech be said ;
For if I thirst, whom humour bloats the while,
Thine are the burnings, thine the aching head ;
To lick ¹³ Narcissus' mirror wouldst thou need
Not many words of invitation sped."

While I was wholly fixed their strife to heed,
"Gaze on," my master cried, "but mark my
word ;

Little there wants 'tween me and thee to breed
A quarrel." I, his voice in anger heard,
Turned me to him with shame that, unforget,
E'en now a whirl of bashful memories stirred ;
And like to him who dreams of loser's lot,
And, dreaming, longs of dream to be abused,
And covets that which is, as if 'twere not,

E'en thus I fared, who, while my tongue refused
To speak, desired excuse, and when I nought
Believed it, ne'ertheless myself excused.

"A lesser shame a greater trespass ought,"
My master said, "than thine hath been, to
clear ;

Wherefore disburden every painful thought ;
And make account of me as ever near,
If Fortune bring thy steps again, as now,
To where like brawlers wrangle, whom to hear
Whoso desires, doth base desire allow."

CANTO XXXI.

ARGUMENT.—*Vision of the Giants around the Wall of the Ninth Circle of Hell—Horn of Nimrod—Ephialtes—The Poets are conveyed by Antæus to the Ninth Circle.*

IT was one tongue of censure, and the same,
That, biting, caused mine either cheek to glance
With ruddy blush ; then medicined my shame.
Thus of ¹ Achilles' and his fathers' lance
I've heard, that wont a bitter largess first
To deal, and then a sweet. We made advance,
Turning our back upon the pit accurst,
Nor spake a word, as thwarting on our way
The bank which round engirds it we traversed.
Here glimmered less than night and less than day,
That little onwards I by sight explored,
Yet heard aloft a horn so harshly bray,
As had the loudest thunder-peal outroared,
Which caused mine eyes right opposite pursue
Its track, till, fixing, on one spot they pored.

Not when of old the ²dolorous rout o'erthrew
Of Charlemagne that hallowed enterprize,
So terrible the blast Orlando blew.
When I brief while had thither strained mine
eyes,
Full many a lofty tower methought I spied ;
And thus : " O Master ! what the land that lies
Yonder ? " " Thy looks impatiently bestride
The gloom," he answered, " o'er too broad a
space,
And vain imaginations hence misguide.
Thou shalt discover, if thou gain the place,
How much the senses can themselves deceive
With distance : prick thee, then, to swifter
pace.
But know, ere we another step achieve,"—
He added, clasping tenderly my hand,—
" What of its strangeness may in part relieve
The truth : no towers are these, but giant band ;
And from the navel downwards all their crowd
Plunged in the well, a grisly border, stand."
As under favour of dispersing cloud
By slow degrees our vision shapes more clear
That which the massy vapour-folds inshroud ;
Piercing the core of darkness thus, while near
And nearer still the frontier edge we creep,
Mine error waned, in waxing of my fear.

For as her rampire with a circling sweep
Of towers above hath ³Montereggio crowned,
Thus o'er the brink of that profoundest deep,
Their bulk half seen, the dreadful giants frowned;
A towery host, whom yet in thunder's tone
Jove out of heaven doth menacing confound.
Already might I mark not face alone
Of one, but shoulders, breast, and trunk behold
Great part, while either side an arm was
shown.
Surely right well did Nature, when the mould
Of breathing creatures fashioned thus she
brake,
Lest war so dread officials had enrolled;
And if nor elephants nor whales to make
Repents her yet, who subtly notes shall find
How she in this the juster way doth take,
And eke the wiser: for discourse of mind,
Wedded with power and inbred lust of wrong,
Had left nor help nor rescue for mankind.
His visage to mine eyes seemed large and long
As that famed ⁴Pine of Rome, Saint Peter's
hight,
His other bones in like proportion strong;
So that the bank which, girdling, hid from sight
All downward from his middle, showed a front
So tall above, to reach his temples might

Three ⁵Frieslanders have rued them of their
vaunt;
For thirty palms of depth 'twas mine to see,
From place where men to clasp the mantle
wont.

“*Raphel mai amech izabi* ⁶*almi*”

Began that grim gigantic mouth to roll
Through lips unapt for sweeter psalmody.
And thus my guide to him: “Besotted soul,
Keep to one vent, and bluster on thy horn,
When rage or other passion mocks controul!
Feel where about thy neck the strap is worn
That holds it tied, and see, thou wildered
spirit,
How thy broad breast it, rib-like, doth adorn.”
Then said, “Himself proclaims his own demerit:
This Nimrod is, who, counting ill the cost,
Of one sole language did the world disherit.
Him leave we, nor with words at random tost
Address, for as his speech is known to none,
To him the sense of other speech is lost.”
Then leftward we, till longer way was done,
Turned, and, a cross-bow-shot beyond, arrived
Before the next, a fiercer, bulkier one.
I cannot name whose master-art contrived
His bondage; but the right arm held he fast
Behind, the left before him strictly gyved

By single chain, that from his neck was passed
Downwards, until the upper half, discerned
Of us, it belted with a fivefold cast.

“ This arrogant in his presumption burned
To try his might against supremest Jove,”
My leader said, “ whence he such wages earned.
’Ephialtes he, right valiantly that strove,
When Gods affrighted fled the giants’ storm ;
There plied those arms he never more shall
move.”

And I to him : “ Yet would I fain inform
Of other bulk, if lawful ’twere, mine eye ;
The immeasurable ⁸Briarëus enorm.”

He answered, “ Thou Antæus shalt hard by
Perceive, who speaketh, nor a chain doth
wear,

Who in the deep where guiltiest caitiffs lie
Shall set us. Whom thou seekest, harbours
there

Far onward, and is bound, nor different made
From this, save only by his fiercer air.”
Did never earthquake’s suddenness invade
So fearfully to shake so strong a tower,
As that huge mass to shake himself essayed.
Death more than ever dreaded I that hour,
Nor needed more to slay me than my dread,
Had I not seen what manacles his power

Held harmless. Thus advancing yet we sped
 To where Antæus lifted from the den
 Five proper ells of length without the head.

“⁹O thou that erst, in that auspicious glen
 Which glory’s heritage to Scipio brought,
 When Hannibal fled fast with all his men,
 Hast for thy quarry thousand lions caught,
 By whom, hadst thou been counted in the brood
 Of brothers, when they warred on heaven, ’tis
 thought

The sons of earth had victory made good ;
 Scorn not the task, but aid us to descend
 Where ’numbs the icy chill Cocytus’ flood.
 Nor us to ¹⁰Tityus nor Typhœus send ;
 This man can give what many here desire ;
 Then writhe no sneering face, but courteous
 bend.

Yet shall he cause the world thy name admire,
 For yet he lives, and longer life to taste
 Expects, if Grace the soul shall not require
 Before his time.” The master said : in haste
 He spread and clasped my leader in those
 hands

Once felt so stringent round the Herculean waist.
 Now Virgil feels their pressure, and commands :
 “Come, let me clasp thee.” So his arms inclose
 Of both one bundle. As to him who stands

Under her slope, the ¹¹ Carisenda shows,
 Whene'er her overhanging height doth lean
 Against a cloud that floating o'er her goes ;
So seemed Antæus there, as bending seen
 Of me, who stood aloof, and wished that ours
 (So looked he then) another road had been.
But lightsome he, to where the gulf devours
 Judas with Lucifer, our burden bore,
 Nor long delays him stooping there, but towers
Aloft, like mast of gallant ship, once more.

CANTO XXXII.

ARGUMENT.—*Ninth Circle of Hell, divided into four compartments, each within the other—Cäina, the place of such as betrayed their kindred—Camicion de' Pazzi—Antenora, place of the betrayers of their country—Bocco degli Abati.*

WERE mine to breathe so rough and hoarse-voiced
rhymes,
As might the horrors of that cavern suit,
Whence underpropt each beetling rock up-
climbs,
More plenteously for juice would I the fruit
Of my conception press: but fate denies
That art; whence trembling I for speech com-
mute
My silence. 'Tis no frolic mood's emprise,
The bottom of the Universe in song
To paint, nor tongue's that *mammy, daddy,*
cries.

But let me in the ¹ Virgins' help be strong,
Who helped Amphion build his Theban wall,
So shall my saying do the fact no wrong.
Ah, rabble seed ! that, cursed above all,
Standest in dungeon indescribable,
Better if here 'mid sheep or goats to stall
Had been your lot ! When down the murky well
Beneath the Giants' feet we stood full low,
And yet I gazed on that high fence of hell,
I heard a warning : " Duly mark how go
Thy footsteps here, nor let them trample o'er
The head yon weary brotherhood of woe."
Wherefore I turned, and saw a lake before
And at my feet, that, icebound, to mine eye
Semblance of glass and not of water bore.
Not Austrian Danube ever caused to lie
So thick a shroud in winter on her track,
Nor ² Tanais underneath his freezing sky,
As here ; on which their overwhelming wrack
Though ³ Tambernicch or ⁴ Pietrapane should
hurl,
They might not make the utmost edge to
crack.
And as the croaking frog is wont to curl
His mouth above the pool, when night comes
round,
And yet of gleaning dreams the village girl,

Such the lorn spectres in that ice we found,
Of livid hue to where the blush of shame
Appears, and with a stork-like note they ground
The chattering teeth. There every face the same
Bent ever downwards, and their mouths of cold—
Of the sad heart their eyes—a witness frame.
My looks, awhile thrown round me, to behold
My feet I turned, and noted two, so pressed,
That both in one their matted hair had rolled.
“Tell who ye are,” I said, “who strain the breast
So close;” and while his neck each hardly
screwed,
And his uplifted face to me addressed,
Their eyes, before with inward rain imbued,
Gushed o’er the eye-lips, and that ice-chill
froze
The tears between them, and together glued.
Might never dovetailed clamp so tightly close
Beam within beam; whence they like he-goats
tossed
Their butting heads, so deadly spite arose.
And one that by the cold both ears had lost,
With visage ever downcast, said, “Declare
Why thou to gaze on us art so engrossed?
If thou desire to know who yonder pair,
The valley where Bisenzio springs they two,
As ⁵ Albert erst, their father, claimed to share.

One body bore them : and ⁶Caïna through
Searching, thou couldst not find that other
shade,

To whom our jelly's bondage more were due.
Not ⁷he through whom the double breach was
made

Of breast and shadow by King Arthur's hand,
Nor ⁸Focaccia, nor he whose head is laid
So cumbrously my prospect to withstand :

Who ⁹Sassol Mascheroni was erewhile :

Well must thou know him, if from Tuscan land.
And mine ¹⁰Camicion de' Pazzi's style

I own, lest thou involve me in more words,

Who Carlin wait, to make my crime less vile."

Then saw I faces in uncounted hordes

Purpled with cold : whence chilled me and
shall chill

An aguish horror from the frozen fords.

And while we tended toward the centre still,

To which all weights consenting gravitate,

And of the eternal gloom I felt a thrill,

I know not if 'twere fortune, will, or fate,

But as my foot between their polls to tread

Essayed, it struck a face with shock so great,

He groaning cried, "Why trample thus my head?

Unless to fill the vengeance thou art here

For Mont' Aperti, wherefore vex me dead ?"

And I : "This once await me, master dear,
 Thenceforth my speed shall equal thy desire ;
 But now I want his help a doubt to clear."

My leader pausing, I from him require,
 Whose hard blasphemings vented yet his wrath,
 "Who art thou, railing with so bitter ire

On other?" "Who art *thou*, to make thy path
 Through ¹¹ Antenora spurning others' cheek
 So roughly," answered he, "too much thescathe,

Wert thou alive?" "I *am*, and if thou seek
 Renown," I said, "that I thy name indite
 'Mid other notes, 'twere worth thy while to
 speak."

And he : "My wish to that is opposite ;
 Hence ; trouble me no more ; thou art not
 taught

The way to flatter in this den aright."

Him, ending, by his hindward scalp I caught,
 And said : "It must be so : thy name make
 known ;

Or every hair shall off thy head be raught !"

Whence he to me : "I will nor tell nor own
 My name, albeit of hairs thou pluck my last,
 If thousand times thou hale me upside down."

His twisted locks already held I fast,
 And more than once a tuft had rent away ;
 But while his eyes he, barking, upward cast,

Another cried, "What ails thee, ¹²Bocca? say,
Is't not enough thy noisy jaws to grind,
But thou must bark? What devil's touch doth
fray?"

"No more I bid thee speak," I said, "to find
Who thou, malignant traitor: I the news
Shall truly bear that brings thy shame to mind."

"Begone," he answered; "tell whate'er thou
choose !

But keep not silence, if thou hence depart,
Of him, so forward now his tongue to use.
Here weighs the Frenchmen's silver on his heart ;
' I saw ¹³Duera's lord,' canst thou report,
' Where cold eternal breeds the sinner's smart.'

If any ask, who else of treasonous sort
Were there, know ¹⁴Beccaria next thy side,
Whose forfeit neck the Florence axe cut short.
Beyond, methinks, ¹⁵John Soldanier doth hide,
With ¹⁶Ganelon and ¹⁷Tribaldell bestowed,
That oped Faenza's gate at sleeping tide."

Now had we parted and resumed our road,
When in one hole two frozen shapes I saw,
Whose heads, the one like other's head-gear
showed :

And, as on bread assailed by hunger's jaw,
His teeth the topmost on his neighbour set,
Where with the nape the crown is joined, to
gnaw.

Not with more greedy fangs did ¹⁸ Tydeus fret
The brows of Menalippus in disdain,
Than he the skull with all its garnish ate.
“ O thou, by sign so bestial making plain
What hatred thine for him that is thy meal,
Tell me the cause,” I said, “ and thus remain
Our compact ; if a just revenge thou feel,
I, learning who ye are, and what his crime,
To thee above due recompense will deal,
If that I speak with dry not ere the time.”

CANTO XXXIII.

ARGUMENT.—*Count Ugolino—Tolommea, place of those who betrayed such as trusted them—Frate Alberigo—The living found among the dead.*

HIS mouth uplifting from its hideous food
The sinner wiped to cleanse it on the hair
Of that same ravaged head, whose back he
chewed.

Then thus began: “Agony of deep despair
Would’st thou revive, whereof mine heart a
throae

Feels e’en to think it, ere my tongue declare.
But if my words may be the seed to sow
His infamy, the traitor whom I gnaw,
Thou shalt of words and weeping see the
flow

Unite. I know thee not, nor by what law
Thou hast dived hither, but true Florentine
Believe; the proof I from thine accents draw.

Know thou that I was once ¹ Count Ugoline,
Ruggieri the Archbishop this: now learn
The reason why such neighbour's part is
mine.
To tell that by his evil counsels' turn
I, fondly trusting me to him, was caught
And done to death, my tale hath no concern.
But what might never to thine ear be brought,
To wit, how cruel was the death that slew,
Hear thou, and judge if he hath wronged me
aught.
A narrow loop-hole of the darkened mew,
That earns by me the title for her own
Of Famine's Tower, and prison yet is due
To other captive, through its chink had shown
Now many a moon, when that ill dream I
dreamed;
Which rent the veil, and coming things made
known.
There he, by me both Lord and Master deemed,
Upon the hill which Lucca town doth screen
From Pisan eyes, the wolf and wolf-cubs seemed
To chase. With dogs well-entered, staunch, and
lean,
Gualandi, with Sismondi first to rank
And with Lanfranchi ranged, in front were
seen.

Brief was the course, methought, and wearied
sank

Father and sons : I dreaming saw the stroke
Of their keen fangs who ripped the quarry's
flank.

When I before the morrow's dawn awoke,
I heard my children moaning in their sleep
Who lay around me; and for bread they
spoke.

Ah pitiless ! if yet from tears thou keep,
To think what my prophetic heart saw clear ;
And if thou weep not, what shall make thee
weep ?

Now had they wakened, and the hour drew near
That wont to bring our sustenance, and stirred
Each, inly doubting of his dream, to fear.

And I, that from below the portal heard
Of that abhorred tower ²by keys made fast,
Looked in my children's face without a word.

I wept not—on my stony heart had passed
A spell; they wept, and my sweet Anselm
said,

‘Father, what ailest thou, such look to cast?’

Yet answer made I none, nor tear I shed
That whole day through, nor through succeed-
ing night,
Till rays of other sun the world o'erspread.

And when a scanty beam had touched with light
Our dolorous prison, and in faces four
Mine own reflected aspect smote my sight,
Both hands for anguish with my teeth I tore ;
And they, misdeeming I to eat was fain,
Who did so, sudden raised them from the
floor,

And said, ‘ O Father, lighter far our pain,
On us to feed thee,—whom thou didst invest
With this unhappy flesh, thou strip again.’

To spare them grief, mine own I then suppressed :
That day and morrow silent I and they
Endured. Stern earth ! how opened not thy
breast

To hide us ? When we counted the fourth day,
Young Gaddo stretched him at my feet to lie,
Saying : ‘ My Father, why mine help delay ?’

Thus perished : and as thou dost me, so I
Beheld my three, as one by one they failed,
Between the fifth and sixth day fall and die.

Already blind, my groping limbs I trailed
O’er each, and on the dead two whole days
long

I called ; then hunger o’er my grief prevailed.”
He ended, and, with eyes distort, among
The crashing bones of that lorn skull to grind
Once more impressed his teeth, as bandog’s
strong.

Ah Pisa ! foul reproach of humankind
In that fair land where ³ Si is heard to sound !
Since slow to punish thee thy neighbour's mind,
Burst be ⁴ Capraia's and Gorgona's bound,
And let them pile 'gainst Arno's mouth a hedge,
Till every child of thine by him be drowned.
For if Count Ugolino fame allege
Betrayed of thy castles, yet thou'rt shamed,
Dooming the sons to feel such torments' edge :
Young Hugo, sure,—Brigata,—went unblamed,
Thou ⁵ second Thebes, by right of tender years ;
Nor less that other twain my song hath named.
Onward we passed where other tribe appears,
Bound by that icefield in more rugged chains,
Nor downward bent, but each his face uprears.
There grief itself the flow of grief restrains,
And sorrow, finding barriers on their eyes,
Rolls inward still to aggravate their pains :
For their first tears a frozen lump arise,
The socket all, like vizor framed of glass,
Filling, as each below the eyebrow dries.
And grant, the deadening chill had caused to pass
Whatever touch of feeling once had dwelt
Within my visage, as from callous mass,
Yet seemed already that a breeze I felt ;
Whence I, "Good master, who such air doth
move ?
Can aught in this froze den to vapour melt ?"

“Thou shalt thine eyes the surest answer prove,”
He said, “anon arriving where thou must
Discern the cause that wafts the gale above.”

With that a lost one from the icy crust
Shrieked out : “O Spirits doomed at last to feel
How cruel ye, to utmost mansion thrust !

These rigid curtains of my sight unseal,
That I a little may the grief assuage
With which my heart goes big, ere tears congeal
Again.” “Would’st thou,” I said, “my help engage,
Tell who thou wert, and if to extricate
I fail, the deepest icepit be my wage.”

“Friar ⁶Alberick am I,” he answered straight :

“He, for the fruits of that ill garden’s seed
Renowned, who here for fig receive a date.”

“Ha !” said I, “thou already dead indeed ?”

And he to me : “Not mine the skill to ken
How yet my body in the world may speed :

Such vantage hath this ⁷Ptolemean den,

That oft the soul falls hither, nor delays

Till ⁸Atropos decide the moment when.

And that thou may’st the solid tears, that glaze

My countenance, more willingly efface,

Know, in the instant when a soul betrays,

As did mine own, it yields the body’s place

To demon habitant, whose fell controul

Sways ever, till its years have run their race.

In cistern fashioned thus is plunged the soul :

And haply yet on earth goes visible

That shadow's body, which in yonder hole

Winters behind me : thou must know him well

If late come down : 'Ser Branca Doria this,

For many a year inwalled in yonder cell."

Then answered I: "Thou mockest me, I wis,

For Branca Doria's life not yet hath ended:

To eat, drink, sleep, and raiment wear is his."

"To upper trench," he said, "by fiends defended

Of Evil Paw, where boils the pitchy tide,

Ere Michel Zanche's ghost had yet descended,

This one a devil, which his room supplied,

In his and other's body left to be,

Whom blood, nor less his treason's share, allied.

But hither now put forth thine hands on me

Mine eyes to open:" and I opened not:

To him so churlish trick was courtesy.

Ah Genoese, men fouled with every spot,

Strange to all civil nurture! why of old

Hath vengeance spared your race from earth to
blot?

With the worst spirit of Romagna's mould

I found one such of yours, his crimes had
hurled

The soul already to Cocytus' hold,

The body living seems to walk the world!

CANTO XXXIV.

—ARGUMENT.—*Giudecca, place of the betrayers of their benefactors—Vision of Lucifer and his three victims—Passage of the centre of Earth, and return of the Poets to upper air.*

“¹ *The banners of the King of Hell unfurl*
Toward us,” my master cried, “then let thine
eyes
Look onward to discern him. As through curl
Of thick-breathed vapour looming, or the skies
Of this our hemisphere in dead of night,
Driven by the blast, is seen afar to rise
A windmill, such the fabric that my sight
Here startled, as the whirlwind caused to run
Behind my guide ; nor shelter to invite
Was other near. Already had I won
To where (I dread to rhyme it) all immersed,
Like motes in glass, the shades pellucid shone.
There some to lie and some to stand dispersed,
This doth his head, and that his soles, uprear ;
Bow-like, a third hath face to feet reversed.

When we by forward step were drawn so near,
 That now it pleased my master to display
 The creature ²once so beautiful of cheer,
 He from my front retired, then made to stay,
 And said : " Behold thou Dis—the spot behold,
 Where thou thine heart with courage must
 array."

Ask me not, reader, how both hoarse and cold
 I then became ; I write it not, nor strive
 To tell what never might by speech be told.
 There I nor died, nor yet remained alive :
 Now think, if thou hast power of thought, and
 see
 What state was mine, that could of both de-
 prive.

The Sovran of the joyless Empery
 His breast from out the icebelt halfway bared,
 And I with giant nearer match should be,
 Than were the giants with his arms compared :
 See, then, how monstrous must that whole have
 been,
 That with its so-formed part conforming
 squared !

If he, once fair as he is foul of mien,
 Against his Maker arrogantly raised
 The brow, from him might well proceed, I
 ween,

All things disastrous. How the sight amazed,
 When on his head I viewed a ³three-fold face !
 One fronting us, that all of scarlet blazed ;
 Above each shoulder's centre from their base
 To blend with this arose the other two,
 And made their joining where the crest hath
 place.

Twixt white and yellowseemed the right one's hue,
 And likest theirs who come whence Nilus
 springs

To bathe his valley, was the left to view.

From under each went forth two mighty wings,
 Whose vastness well with such a bird compares :
 The ship I know not, that her canvas flings
 So broadly to the gale. No plumage theirs,
 But filmy like the bat's, and ever rose,
 As still he fluttered them, three several airs,
 Whose icy breathings all Cocytus froze.

Six eyes had he to weep—o'er triple chin
 With trickling tears his bloody slaver flows.

From every mouth suspense a child of sin
 His teeth in manner of the flax-brake tore,
 And three at once, so tortured, held within.
 Yet nought the bite to him that hung before,
 Compared with clawings, whence his back, all red
 And skinless, oft remained one angry sore.

“Lo !” said my master, “on whose soul is shed
Wrath’s utmost—Judas he, the Iscariot !
Who shows the struggling legs, but hides the
head.”

“Of twain, whose downward heads have equal lot,
Is Brutus hanging from the sable snout ;
Mark how he writhes him !—word he utters
not.

And Cassius he that seems of limb so stout.

But night returns: ’tis time that we make
good,

Since we have seen the whole, our way without.”

Then, I his neck encircling, as he would,

He chose of time and place the fitting tide,

And when the wings enough disparted stood,

Fast to those hairy ribs his grasp applied,

Thence seizing lock by lock, he deep descended

’Tween the thick fleece and solid icecrust’s side.

‘When now we dropped to where the thigh hath
blended

Its curve exactly with the haunches’ swell,

With weariness and pain my guide, suspended,

Held now his head where late his ancles fell,

And clutched, like man who climbs, the shaggy
hair,

That I believed we turned us back to Hell.

“Cling fast; for we by so misshapen stair”—

The master said, whose panting gasps made
known

His faintness—“must to quit such ill pre-
pare.”

Then issued forth by hollow vent of stone,

And while along the ledge he found me seat,

Near my place took with wary step his own.

I raised mine eyes, expectant yet to meet

With Lucifer as I had left him last,

And saw him upward hold the legs and feet.

And if with wonder then I turned aghast,

Let the dull herd imagine, that doth take

But little note what point it was I passed.

“Up, lift thee on thy feet,” the master spake,

“Long is the journey, difficult the road,

The sun returns, and day will shortly break.”

No palace-hall where halting we abode,

But all deform with rugged pavement this,

And scant of light, a natural dungeon showed.

When now I stood erect: “From Hell’s abyss,

Master,” I said, “ere I myself have torn,

Speak briefly to reform my thought amiss.

Where now the ice? What fixeth yon forlorn

Thus upside down? And wherefore hath from

eve

The sun so quick his transit made to morn?”

"Thy mind," said he, "doth yet thy place conceive

Beyond the centre, where his slag I caught—
 The guilty serpent who the world doth cleave:
 Thou wert beyond it while descent I sought;
 The point, to which all weights are tending,
 thou

Didst pass, what time I turned me, and art
 brought

Beneath that opposite half-cycle now

That poises ours, whereon the broad dry ground
 Is spread, and hath His bloodshed on its
 brow,

THE MAN in life and death the Sinless found.¹

Thy feet a globule press, whose smaller room
 Shapes other surface to Giudecca's round;
 Here morning dawns, when there 'tis evening
 gloom;

And he, whose hair a ladder's aid hath given,
 Is fixed yet as by primeval doom.

⁵ When this side earth he headlong fell from
 heaven,

For fear of him, what land had erst appeared
 Curtained herself in Ocean, and was driven
 Far as our hemisphere: and, haply, feared
 With like alarm, what here is seen above
 Left in her flight the void, the upland reared."

Down yonder doth from Belzebub remove
A space as distant as that tomb hath scope,
Whose amplitude not eye, but ear must prove,
By tinkling of a rill whose waters ope
Their way below through stony rent of time,
Worn by their winding lapse and gentle slope.
To seek return to daylight world sublime
My guide and I that darksome path explored,
And while he first, I second, 'gan to climb,
No care to rest us might our haste afford,
Till through a rounded opening I saw plain
The glorious things in part which heaven doth
 hoard,
And thence we rose to view the stars again.

NOTES.

CANTO I.

¹ In his *Convito*, Dante has placed the acmé of man's natural powers at the age of 35 ; and since it appears, from a passage in Canto xxi., that he supposes himself to have made this journey to the invisible world in A.D. 1300, the date which Boccaccio, Leonard Aretin, and others assign to his birth, A.D. 1265, is here confirmed by the poet himself.

² The thick wood is the crowd of human passions and vices ; the slumber that of the spirit overpowered by these ; the hill is that of virtue. Happily for his fame, however, the poet recurs much more rarely to this allegory in the course of the following Cantos, than the perverted ingenuity of his older commentators has represented.

³ Lombardi explains this to mean the deadening effect of the baser indulgences, and compares the line with Canto iii. v. 64, where the poet denies that the slothful ever lived. There is, however, some doubt as to the construction of the original, and I had translated it thus :—

“ Whence never yet mote living wight emerge.”

⁴ By the panther is meant carnal appetite ; by the lion, pride and ambition ; by the wolf, avarice, or, as some explain it, envy. In the effect which the last-named animal produced on him, the poet probably alludes to his banishment, and the plundering of his house at Florence.

⁵ Dante here follows Virgil :—

“ In this soft season (let me dare to sing)

The world was hatched by heaven's imperial King,

In prime of all the year, and holidays of spring.

Then did the new creation first appear,

Nor other was the tenour of the year :

When laughing heaven did the great birth attend,
 And eastern winds their wintry breath suspend :
 Then sheep first saw the sun in open fields,
 And savage beasts were sent to stock the wilds,
 And golden stars flew up to light the skies,
 And man's relentless race from stony quarries rise.
 Nor could the tender, new creation bear
 Th' excessive heats or coldness of the year ;
 But chill'd by winter, or by summer fired,
 The middle temper of the spring required,
 When warmth and moisture did at once abound,
 And heaven's indulgence brooded on the ground."

Dryden's Georg., ii.

⁶ The long silence is supposed to allude to that utter neglect in which Virgil's writings had lain from the irruption of the barbarians into Italy to Dante's own times.

⁷ Virgil was born in Andes, afterwards called Petula, a town distant two or three miles from Mantua. The words "*Ancor che fosse tardi*" have given rise to much controversy, as the year of Virgil's birth was A.U. 684, and Cæsar became *perpetual Dictator*, A.U. 709, five months before his death. Vellutello's explanation is the most approved, who interprets those words to mean that, although Virgil was born in Julius Cæsar's time, the latter did not establish his sovereignty in Rome till many years after.

⁸ Lombardi understands this of Dante's Latin verses, upon which, as Petrarch afterwards, the poet was likely to value himself more than on his power over his native language.

⁹ This is now generally agreed to mean Il Can Grande, younger brother of Alboin, and who shared with him the Lordship of Verona. He was elected captain of the Ghibelline League, and through him, probably, Dante cherished the hope of restoration to those civil rights of which the wolf (envy) had deprived him. As Boccaccio asserts that Dante composed the first seven Cantos of his poem previously to his banishment, and the Can Grande was born in 1291, it is reasonably concluded that this passage was added at a later period. The expression "*Questi non ciberà terra, ne peltro*" intimates that the objects of the Can Grande's ambition should be neither extensive lands nor hoards of money.

¹⁰ The two Feltros are Feltre in the March of Treviso, and Monte Feltro in Romagna (not in the March of Ancona, see Canto xxvii. v. 37).

¹¹ The epithet *umile* here seems borrowed from Virgil's "*humilemque videmus Italiam*."—*Æn.* 3.

¹² Beatrice, of whom more is said in Canto ii.

¹³ Although Milton places St. Peter with his keys "at heaven's wicket," it appears that in this he differs from his great predecessor, who speaks of an angel at the gate of purgatory with the keys of the apostle, but nowhere mentions a gate leading from purgatory into heaven.

CANTO II.

¹ Æneas became father of Silvius by Lavinia. For his descent into the infernal regions, see the sixth Book of the "*Æneid*."

² "From every cause, either of a civil or of an ecclesiastical nature, it was easy to foresee that Rome must enjoy the respect, and would soon claim the obedience, of the provinces. The society of the faithful bore a just proportion to the capital of the empire, and the Roman Church was the greatest, the most numerous, and, in regard to the West, the most ancient of all the Christian establishments, many of which had received their religion from the pious labours of the missionaries. Instead of *one* apostolic founder, the utmost boast of Antioch, of Ephesus, or of Corinth, the banks of the Tiber were supposed to have been honoured with the preaching and martyrdom of the *two* most eminent among the apostles; and the bishops of Rome very prudently claimed the inheritance of whatever prerogatives were attributed either to the person, or to the office of St. Peter."—*Gibbon's Dec. and Fall*, c. xv.

³ That is, to the unseen world. St. Paul speaks of himself as having been caught up into the third heaven—into Paradise.—*2 Cor.* xii. 2, 3.

⁴ In Limbo, of which we have a description in Canto iv.

⁵ On the much-disputed question concerning the person of Beatrice, whether it be real or allegorical, Lombardi's remark seems worthy of notice, that Dante's own mind was familiarized to the representation of abstract ideas by real personages, as in Tobit the Divine aid is personified by Raphael the archangel, and

that we must receive his Beatrice under this two-fold character—as an earthly female, and as theology or Divine wisdom. The Introduction to Neander's "History of the Early Church" contains some striking remarks on the idealistic theology of the Alexandrian Jews, of which Philo gives the most celebrated specimen; and in which we find a literal acceptance of facts and persons in sacred history combined with the most absurd attempts to spiritualize them. (See Rose's Translation of Neander, vol. i. p. 48).

⁶ This is supposed to be the Divine clemency, as Lucia is interpreted the Divine grace. The allegorizing commentators of the earlier Christian times understood by Leah, the active—by Rachel, the contemplative life.

CANTO III.

¹ Power, according to the schoolmen, is the attribute of the Father; wisdom, of the Son; love, of the Holy Ghost.

² The rebel angels, for whom hell was appointed, are the "endless things" here meant.

³ Such a neutral party among the angelic host is alluded to by Clement of Alexandria.—*Strom.* vii.

⁴ Buttura explains the word *alcuna* of this celebrated line to mean *nessuna*, and censures Rivarol for thus translating the passage—"Et l'abîme leur refusa ses profondes retraites, de peur que les coupables ne se glorifiasent d'avoir de tels compagnons de leur peines." If *alcuna* be rightly interpreted here by *nessuna*, I still adopt Rivarol's explanation.

⁵ The penalty in this, as in many other instances throughout the poem, is ingeniously devised to counteract the natural bias of the criminals: the inert being condemned to perpetual motion.

⁶ Esau, the Emperor Dioclesian, Pope Celestine the Fifth, have each been suggested as the object of the poet's scorn in this passage; but Lombardi has justly argued that Dante *never* represents himself as recognizing any one whom he has not personally known, and he therefore suggests that some fellow-citizen is meant, possibly Torrigiano dei Cerchi, who had, by his refusal to support the party of the Bianchi, in Florence, incurred the poet's high displeasure. One account, professedly taken from an ancient chronicle, states that the Florentine people

had offered the chief place in the republic to this Torrigiano, which he had declined from reluctance to incur the necessary expense.

⁷ This line, and the twenty-seventh of the first Canto, illustrate each other: the poet means that their life was not worthy of the name.

⁸ The fable of Charon and his ferry-boat is supposed to have been derived by the Greeks from an ancient Egyptian custom, by which, on the decease of any individual, certain judges assembled together in a boat to determine the claims of the deceased to posthumous honours.—*Rollin*.

⁹ It is observable that, on the three occasions of his passage from our world into Hell, from Hell into Purgatory (*Purg.* c. ix. v. 11), and from Purgatory into Paradise (*Purg.* c. xxxii. v. 68), the poet falls into a trance, by which Lombardi understands him to intimate that man cannot enter into the contemplation of the invisible world except with a mind disburdened (as in sleep) of earthly impressions.

CANTO IV.

¹ Whether Virgil died B.C. 19, according to Petavius, or A.D. 3, according to Ruæus, the interval between his death and the Crucifixion was brief enough to justify the expression here used.

² The article of the Creed, regarding the Descent into Hell, is here obviously taken by Dante in its most literal sense.

³ An ancient bas-relief in the library of the Colonna Palace, the subject of which is the apotheosis of Homer, represents him holding a sword in his hand, in token of the wars his poem celebrates.

⁴ The seven walls, according to some expositors, allegorize the four moral and three speculative virtues: according to others, the seven liberal arts which formed the Greater Course of the scholastic instruction. Lombardi prefers the former explanation. The stream is supposed to be eloquence, and its easy passage by the poets, to allude to these words of Cicero (*De Nat. Deor.* ii. 11): "Nor should I have dreaded a rhetorician, however eloquent; for I am not to be confounded by a torrent (flumine) of empty words."

⁵ The Electra here mentioned is the daughter of Atlas and mother of Dardanus the founder of Troy : she is ranked by Ovid, in his *Fasti*. iv. 31, among the Pleiades.

⁶ Penthesilea, a queen of the Amazons, who came to the help of Troy, and was slain by Achilles.

⁷ Lavinia, daughter of Latinus, and betrothed to Turnus ; she afterwards became the second wife of Æneas.

⁸ Cornelia, daughter of Scipio Africanus and mother of the Gracchi.

⁹ Julia, daughter of Cæsar, and wife of Pompey the Great.

¹⁰ Marcia, wife of Cato Uticensis, given by him to his friend Hortensius, after whose death she returned to her former husband.

¹¹ Salaheddin, the celebrated rival of our first Richard in the wars of the Crusades.

¹² Aristotle is placed the first in honour by Dante, in perfect conformity with the opinions prevalent in his age.

¹³ Thales of Miletus, one of the Seven sages ; he held water to be the fundamental principle of all things.

¹⁴ Anaxagoras of Clazomenæ, preceptor of Pericles, of whose opinions very contrary accounts are given ; some assigning to him the merit of having first distinguished between an intelligent cause and the material universe ; others asserting that his principles tended toward atheism.

¹⁵ Diogenes of Sinope, chief of the Cynics.

¹⁶ Democritus of Abdera, who taught the ancient atomic theory of the world. (See Cudworth, *Int. Syst.*)

¹⁷ Heraclitus of Ephesus, remarkable for the obscurity of his doctrines, derived all things from a fiery principle.

¹⁸ Zeno, founder of the Stoic school.

¹⁹ Empedocles of Agrigentum, author of a philosophical treatise in Greek hexameters.

²⁰ Dioscorides of Anagarba, in Cilicia, who wrote on the qualities of plants and minerals.

²¹ Ptolemy, the geographer ; author of the mundane system, named after him the Ptolemaic.

²² Hippocrates, Galen, Avicenna, the latter an Arabian, all famous for medical science.

²³ Averroes, also an Arabian, born at Cordova, in Spain ; he flourished in the twelfth century, and his "grand Commentary" was written to explain Aristotle's works.

CANTO V.

¹ Dante has here, with little ceremony, converted the Cretan monarch and legislator into a monster. I must refer those who wish for an impartial statement of the evidences, mythical and historical, which remain to us of this extraordinary personage, to the fifth chapter of Bishop Thirlwall's "History of Greece," who concludes his masterly sketch with the following suggestion—"The age of Minos may not improbably be considered as representing a period, when the arts, introduced by Phœnician settlers, had raised one of the Cretan tribes, under an able and enterprising chief, to a temporary pre-eminence over its neighbours, which enabled it to establish a sort of maritime empire. This supposition may, perhaps, afford the easiest explanation of the singular legend that Minos perished in Sicily, whither he had sailed in pursuit of Dædalus. This story seems to have had its origin in the progress of the Phœnician settlements toward the west. Dædalus flies before Minos, first to Sicily, and then to Sardinia."

² In the opening of the fourth "Æneid," Virgil has made Dido thus express herself to her sister Anna:—

"But first let yawning earth a passage rend,
And let me through the dark abyss descend;
First let avenging Jove with flames on high
Drive down this body to the nether sky,
Condemn'd with ghosts in endless night to lie,
Before I break the plighted faith I gave;
No! he who had my vows shall ever have;
For whom I loved on earth, I worship in the grave."

Dryden's Translation.

³ Achilles became successively enamoured of Deidamia, Briseis, and Polyxena, daughter of Priam. His attachment to the last of these ladies is said to have cost him his life; being enticed into an ambush, he was shot by Paris in his vulnerable heel.

⁴ Tristan, one of the knights of King Arthur's Round Table, nephew of Mark King of Cornwall, by whom he was murdered in revenge for his adultery with Isotta, the queen of that monarch.

⁵ Francesca, daughter of Guido da Polenta, Lord of Ravenna, a lady of great beauty and elegance, became the wife of Lancelot,

son of Malatesta, Lord of Rimini, a man of merit, but deformed in person. The accomplishments of Paolo, a relation of her husband, were unhappily placed in too striking contrast with the defects of the latter. Francesca became an unfaithful wife, and being surprised in the company of her paramour by the injured Lancelot, they were both slain on the spot with a single blow.

⁶ Caina is that portion of the lowest depth of the Poet's Hell which confines the treacherous murderers of their kindred. The derivation of the name is obvious.

⁷ Many commentators, finding no passage in Virgil's poems expressive of this sentiment, have had recourse to "Boethius de Consolatione Philosophiæ." But Lombardi's conjecture is much more natural, that it applies to Virgil, who has himself, in the preceding Canto, told Dante that he and his companions in Limbo were—

— "di tanto offesi,

Che senza speme vivemo in desio." (Canto iv. v. 41, 42).

⁸ Lancelot du Lac—perhaps the most distinguished of the Round-Table Knights—was the lover of Ginevra, Arthur's queen. Their adventures formed the subject of many romances by the poets of the chivalric age.

⁹ I cannot agree with Lombardi here, that the poet, in the midst of so pathetic a tale, made his Francesca gravely inform her hearers that Galeotto was the name at once of the book and the writer: a more frigid interruption of the current of passionate feeling could hardly have been produced by the waving of Lucifer's own wings over the scene;

"Onde Cocito tutto s'aggelava."

CANTO VI.

- ¹ "No sooner landed, in his den they found
The triple porter of the Stygian sound,
Grim Cerberus, who soon began to rear
His crested snakes, and armed his bristling hair.
The prudent Sibyl had before prepared
A sop in honey steeped to charm the guard:
Which, mixed with powerful drugs, she cast before
His greedy, grinding jaws, just oped to roar:

With three enormous mouths he gapes, and straight
With hunger pressed devours the pleasing bait."

Dryden's Æneid, iv.

¹ Ciaccio, in the dialect of Florence, means *hog*.

² Florence, divided between the factions of the Bianchi and Neri.

³ The Bianchi, supposed to be so called from the native district of the Cerchi their leaders, the woody Val di Nievole.

⁴ Charles of Valois, brother of Philip the Fair, and founder of the French dynasty of Valois. Like our own John, he bore the surname of Lackland. Being sent by Boniface VIII. to settle the disputes of the different factions in Florence, he pursued the temporizing policy of which Ciaccio here accuses him, until a convenient opportunity presented itself for banishing the leaders of the Bianchi or Ghibelline party, and among them Dante himself. The three sons are three years.

⁵ It cannot now be ascertained who these two worthies were, but Guido Cavalcanti is generally believed to have been one.

⁷ Farinata degli Uberti, Tegghiaio Aldobrandi degli Adimari, Arrigo de' Fisanti, Mosca degli Uberti or Lamberti. The first is met with again in Canto x. The second, with Jacopo Rusticucci, in Canto xvi., and Mosca in Canto xxviii.

⁸ The Aristotelic philosophy, which teaches that the more perfect the human nature, the more exquisite is its sense, whether of pleasure or pain.

CANTO VII.

¹ This first line has often employed the ingenuity of commentators. Lombardi asserts that it is a medley of languages intended to display the influence of the Demon of Wealth in all countries, and that the whole sentence, if complete, would have been of this nature; "Holla! Satan, holla! great Satan, how little art thou respected!" But as the word *Satan* means "enemy," may not the exclamation be uttered in Plutus' character as warder of this fourth circle: "Ho! enemies, Ho! enemies would pass?"

² Michael the Archangel. The word *adulterous* is here used in the spiritual sense which the Scriptures so often assign to it.

³ The Straits of Messina, in ancient geography, were famous for the rocks of Scylla and whirlpool of Charybdis on their oppo-

site sides. It is impossible to say how far the Phœnicians' commercial jealousy combined with the Greek liveliness of imagination to people Sicily and the seas beyond it with monstrous and terrific apparitions.

⁴ In perfect consistency with this part of his poem Dante has filled the *Bolgia* of the Simoniacal with Popes. (see Canto xix.) Avarice is the besetting sin of old age, and the higher clerical dignities are seldom attained till late in life: the celibacy of the Romish clergy may have a similar influence, and in the times of Dante those whose profession rendered them unwarlike were likely to surround themselves with wealth as a means of protection.

⁵ For a description of the source whence Acheron, Styx, Phlegethon, and Cocytus are derived, see Canto xiv.

CANTO VIII.

¹ The opening of this Canto has been produced by some evidence that Dante wrote the seven preceding while yet a citizen of Florence, and resumed his work at this point after his exile; but this basis appears to me too slight to support the theory raised upon it.

² Mazzoni argues from the Scholiast on Thucydides iii. 22, that the double beacon-light indicated that their reception at the City of Dis would be hostile; but Lombardi, with more probability, supposes it meant to announce the number of strangers arrived at the tower.

³ Phlegyas, son of Mars by Chryse, was king of the Lapithæ, and father of Ixion and Coronis. Provoked by the violence which Apollo had offered to his daughter, he marched an army to Delphi and burnt the temple of the God. Daniello asserts that he is placed among the Irascible, from the violence of his temper: Lombardi, that his duty as ferryman to the infernal city indicates rather his impiety. I believe that both are right: his headstrong resentment led him to defy the Gods. The Phlegyans, of whom he is the mythical head, are themselves a race antecedent to history, and their legend yet remains an inexplicable enigma. (See Bp. Thirlwall's Hist. of Gr., Chap. iv.)

⁴ So Virgil, describing the embarkation of the Sibyl and Æneas on board the bark of Charon:—

"He clears the deck, receives the mighty freight,
The leaky vessel groans beneath the weight;
Slowly she sails, and hardly stems the tides:
The pressing water pours within her sides."

Dryden's Æneid, vi.

⁵ According to Boccaccio, Philip Argenti was of the noble family of the Cavicciuli, a branch of the Adimari, and was remarkable for the brutal violence which he displayed on the slightest provocation.

⁶ Dis, Pluto. The fabrics of this city are described as "mosque-like," probably with reference to Mahometanism as the exhalation of the bottomless pit. (See Rev. c. ix.)

⁷ Alluding to the resistance made by them at the time of the Saviour's descent into Hell, noticed in Canto iv.

CANTO IX.

¹ This passage has occasioned much dispute among the commentators, some of whom, assuming (in contradiction to Lucan and Dante themselves) that the occasion alluded to by Virgil here is that described in the *Pharsalia*, accuse Dante of an anachronism, Virgil being then alive: but Lombardi has shown that the account of Lucan *cannot* be reconciled with the journey which Virgil describes himself to have made: in the first place, Erictho, in Lucan, chooses a corpse from the battle-field:—

"Among the dreadful carnage strewed around
One for her purpose fit at length she found;
In his pale jaws a rusty hook she hung,
And dragged the wretched, lifeless load along."

Rowe's Lucan, book vi.

After sundry incantations she compels the spirit to re-enter the body, interrogates it respecting the fortunes of the war, and receives its answer, which commences thus:—

"Seek not from me the Parcæ's will to know:
I saw not what their dreadful looms ordain,
Too soon recalled to hated life again;
Recalled, ere yet my wandering ghost had pass'd
The silent stream that wafts us all to rest."—*Ibid.*

The resuscitated corpse, having warned the younger Pompey that

he shall learn more from his father's ghost in Sicily, implores his dismissal :—

“ A pile of hollowed wood Erictho builds,
The soul with joy its mangled carcase yields ;
She bids the kindling flames ascend on high,
And leaves the weary wretch at length to die.”—*Ibid.*

Now if this be compared with Virgil's account to Dante, it will at once be obvious that they speak of different occasions ; but as the Mantuan informs us that his visit to Giudecca was made shortly after his death, there is no anachronism in assuming that the same Erictho lived long enough to compel his obedience by similar spells. I regret that the limits of a note preclude my quoting the whole of this scene from Rowe's translation, which is highly spirited.

² Here Lombardi seems to insinuate an anachronism, because he argues, if Virgil went down soon after his own decease, Judas, who died in the same year with our Lord, could not yet have given name to the Giudecca. But Dante nowhere asserts this : he simply makes Virgil declare that he went down to the circle (now) named after Judas ; and the poet's mind, as Lombardi himself justly remarks, is to display Virgil's perfect acquaintance with the lowest depths of Hell.

³ Proserpine.

⁴ The attempt of Theseus, aided by Pirithous, was to carry off Proserpine, and he paid for his rashness by imprisonment in Tartarus until delivered by Hercules : his less fortunate companion was thrown by the Furies to Cerberus to be devoured.

⁵ The moral is the hardening effect of indulged lust allegorized in the beautiful but fatal features of Medusa. The picture by Poussin in our National Gallery conveys a forcible idea of the petrifying power of Medusa's head.

⁶ Comparing this simile with Canto iii. v. 133, and Canto xxxiii. v. 105, we find that Dante adheres to the opinion of the Stoics given by Cicero, de Div. ii. 44, “ That the cold exhalations of the earth beginning to flow become winds, but by mingling with the clouds, and bursting them in those portions which are of greatest rarity, produce thunders and lightnings.”

⁷ It appears much more rational to understand this, with Lombardi, of the Descent into Hell, already twice alluded to, than to

suppose the heavenly messenger reminding his opponents how Hercules dragged Cerberus out of the infernal regions. The dog then chained and muzzled might be supposed to turn his fury on himself.

⁸ Arles in Provence, the ancient *Arelate*.

⁹ Pola, the city of Istria, so celebrated for its ruins, of the classic age. The bay of Quarnaro (*Sinus Flanaticus*) divides Istria from Croatia.

CANTO X.

¹ The valley of Jehoshaphat in the original, to which, according to the prophet Joel (iii. 12), literally interpreted, the heathen awakened from the sleep of death are summoned to hear their final judgment.

² The doctrine of Epicurus was, that the soul consisted of atoms, only differing from those of the body in being more subtle, and that the tenuity of its particles allowed it to pervade the corporeal frame. His cosmogony is developed by the poet Lucretius. To the general reader his tenets and their consequences are rendered familiar under their Jewish type—the doctrine of the Sadducees.

³ Farinata degli Uberti, mentioned in the sixth Canto, was chief of the Ghibelline party in Florence; and in the year 1260, having procured the aid of the Siennese imperialists, routed the Guelphs in the famous battle of Monte Aperto, in the vale of Arbia. He appears to have tarnished his nobler qualities by a practical Epicureanism, as Dante significantly enquires for him in the Gluttons' circle.

⁴ It must not be forgotten, that Dante's progenitors, and indeed the poet himself in early life, belonged to the faction of the Guelphs.

⁵ Cavalcante di Cavalcanti, though placed here in the same sepulchre with Farinata, was a principal leader of the Guelphs. His son Guido became the intimate friend of Dante, but is represented as devoting himself to the philosophers, to the neglect of poetry.

⁶ The moon, reigning in the regions below as Proserpine. He here predicts the poet's own banishment within the time specified.

⁷ I am compelled to differ from Lombardi in his explanation of

the Italian text here, and have followed the majority, who interpret *regge* by *ritorni, riedi*.

⁸ It appears that from every amnesty or indulgence granted to the Ghibellines the Uberti had been studiously excluded.

⁹ After the rout of the Guelphs at Monte Aperto, and the return of the Ghibellines to Florence, a general council, attended by ambassadors from that party in the several Tuscan cities, was held at Empoli, at which it was seriously proposed to exterminate the Guelphs by demolishing Florence: this measure Farinata strenuously and successfully resisted.

¹⁰ The sin of unbelief having reference to future and unseen things, the poet represents its punishment as the exact opposite. The condemned infidels see and must believe the future, but are ignorant of the present.

¹¹ Frederic II., Emperor of Germany. This prince, after his return from a crusade, in which he had by negotiation secured better terms to the Christians of the East than any who had preceded him in the attempt, spent the remainder of his stormy life in a constant struggle against the Popes Gregory IX., Celestine IV., and Innocent IV. He was several times excommunicated, but the charge of heresy against him appears very questionable. (See Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., cent. 13.)

¹² Cardinal Ottaviano degli Ubaldini, a man of imperious temper, and favourable to the Ghibellines. A saying of his has been reported which justifies Dante for placing him here. Being disappointed by the Ghibelline party in some request, he exclaimed, "If there be a soul, I have lost it in the cause of the Ghibellines!"

¹³ Beatrice must be intended by this, although in the Paradiso, Cacciaguida, Dante's great-great-grandfather, reveals his future destinies to him.

CANTO XI.

¹ This is a much disputed passage, in consequence of an alleged confusion by Dante of the Greek Emperor Anastasius I., with one of the Popes of that name. Dante is accused of having permitted his Ghibelline prejudices so far to overcome him, that he took upon trust the statements of a certain Fra Martino, a Polish Dominican friar, who wrote ecclesiastical chronicles. Certainly Photinus, who appears to have cherished errors similar to

those of the modern Socinians, died many years before the elevation of the first Anastasius to the Papacy, while the danger which the Emperor of that name incurred from the suspicion of heresy is well known. For an account of the tumults at Constantinople, occasioned by his theological opinions, see Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," c. 47.

² This is the opinion of Cicero, *De Off. i.* Violence is the abuse of a gift common to man and brutes, bodily strength; fraud, of a gift peculiar to man, his reason.

³ Ducange understands this of Cahors in Guienne, anciently called Divona, afterwards Cadurci, and famous as a nest of usurers.

⁴ In the opening of the seventh book of the Nicomachean Ethics of Aristotle. The poet has faithfully represented the Greek philosopher here.

⁵ Aristotle's *Physica*, b. ii.

⁶ Nature and Art.

⁷ The usurer, availing himself neither of natural powers (as gold, notwithstanding *Shylock's* assertion, neither grows nor breeds), nor yet of art (since his own ingenuity is not, as the gilder's or jeweller's, exerted to give the material a new value), discovers a third way, which, according to our author, is an unwarrantable act of presumption.

⁸ The period of the year marked by Dante at the opening of his poem being the spring, the sun was in Aries; the constellation Pisces, therefore, now rising, indicates the approach of dawn. Bootes is then seen in the quarter of Canrus, the north-west wind.

⁹ *Balzo* is the Italian word, which seems happily to describe the upward sweep of a range of hills from the plain.

CANTO XII.

¹ "At the first post from Verona we entered once more the gorge of the mountains through a passage formed by perpendicular cliffs, only wide enough to admit the torrent and the road. The Adige is a fierce, brawling, muddy stream, of a dirty yellow, resembling the colour of the rocks that overhang it. These rocks, however, are picturesque and romantic in their form, and, although generally bare on their sides, are crowned with vegetation on the summit.....The valley becomes more wooded as we advance along

the banks of the torrent to Volargna. Passing the village, the castle of Chiusa appears in sight, perched upon the crags of a precipice, which is washed by the Adige. The road now crosses the river, leaving on the left the venerable giant Monte Baldo, one of the most magnificent objects in the scenery of this region. From Arsenigo, the last Veronese village, we penetrate through a very difficult defile of naked rocks, till we reach Porghetto, the first in the jurisdiction of Trent."—*Leitch Ritchie's Travelling Sketches*, c. xi.

² The Minotaur, in Greek mythology, the offspring of Pasiphae, and guardian of the Cretan labyrinth.

³ Theseus, who slew this monster, when by the aid of Ariadne and her clew he threaded the mazes of the labyrinth. Bishop Thirlwall (*Hist. of Greece*, c. v.) is of opinion that this celebrated legend preserves some genuine historical recollections, although the only fact plainly indicated by it is a temporary connection between Crete and Athens.

⁴ See Canto iv. v. 52, &c., and Canto xxi. v. 112, &c.

⁵ The commentators quote the opinions of Empedocles here, who held six principles—the four elements, love, and discord; and maintained, that when the motions of the heavens were concordant, all things turned to Chaos, but when discord took the place of their union, they separated, and the world resumed that condition in which we see it.

⁶ The fable of the Centaurs might have arisen from the appearance of the first Thessalian horsemen among an ignorant and superstitious people. It is at least remarkable, that the Greek tribe, whose poetry and sculpture have most widely extended the fame of this marvellous race, inhabited a country unfavourable to the operations of cavalry. Did the Metopes of the Parthenon, in their representations of successful struggles between mere men and Centaurs, convey no useful lesson to the Athenian infantry?

⁷ Nessus, slain by Hercules in consequence of an insult offered to Deianira, when he found himself dying, assured the lady that, should her husband ever forsake her, a garment anointed with the blood then flowing from him would act as a philtre. The death of Hercules from his wife's credulity forms the subject of the *Trachiniæ* of Sophocles.

⁸ Chiron, the preceptor of Achilles. "With him, the *justest of Centaurs*, was associated the idea entertained by the Greeks of

early Hellenic education.....His name appears to be derived from his *manual* accomplishments, and furnishes proof of the value attached in the earliest times—a fact well known from the special testimony of Homer—to skill in the medical and surgical arts. Indeed, it is not improbable that the *botanical* fertility by which Mount Pelion is distinguished among the mountains of Greece may have recommended it for the site of the Greek heroic school.” — *Wordsworth's Greece*, pp. 223, 224.

⁹ Pholus is mentioned by Virgil as slain at the battle of the Centaurs and Lapithæ; by Ovid, as saving himself by flight: but Eurytion, or Eurytus, is commonly named as the provoker of their quarrel.

¹⁰ Beatrice. (See Canto ii.)

¹¹ Some expositors have here put forward a claim for Alexander, tyrant of Phæræ, in Thessaly; but the character of the Macedonian is sufficiently applicable to this position.

¹² Dionysius (the elder most probably), tyrant of Syracuse.

¹³ Azzolin, or Ezzelin da Romano, Vicar Imperial in the March of Treviso, and tyrant of Padua. This man, although cruel to excess, had enough of human feeling left to refuse perpetrating the arrest of his own father, to which the Pope had instigated him. In consequence of his cruelties as Vicar Imperial, much odium fell on Frederick II., his patron. He fell at length a victim to treachery, and the desertion of his ancient associates; and, being wounded in the foot as he fled to Vimercato, he was carried a prisoner to Soncino, where he refused to speak, rejected all medical aid, tore off the bandages from his wounds, and finally expired on the eleventh day of his captivity.—*Sismondi*.

¹⁴ Obizzo of Este was Marquis of Ferrara, and smothered, say the commentators, by his own son, whom the poet for that unnatural deed terms *figliastro*.

¹⁵ In the year 1270, Guy of Montfort, in the church of Viterbo, and at the moment of elevating the host, stabbed to the heart Henry D'Almaine, son of the king of the Romans, the cousin of Edward I. Guy and his brother Simon dragged the body from the church, mutilated it, and then rode off; the Count Aldobrandini, whose daughter one of them had married, favouring their escape. (See the “Pictorial History of England,” b. iv., c. 1). This crime they committed in revenge for the ignominious death of their father, the celebrated Simon. The heart of their victim, inclosed

in a golden chalice, is said to have been placed upon a column erected on London-bridge.

¹⁶ Attila, king of the Huns, surnamed the Scourge of God, for his invasion of Italy, &c. (See Gibbon's "Decline and Fall," c. 135).

¹⁷ Pyrrhus here is thought by some to mean the king of Epirus; by others, to whom I incline, to be Neoptolemus, son of Achilles, whose cruelty Dante's master Virgil places in so striking a light in the second book of the "*Æneid*."

¹⁸ Sextus has had two or three candidates for the honour of filling up his designation. Sextus Pompey is probably intended, who became a pirate in the Sicilian seas; and the transition to the two brigands is thus more natural.

¹⁹ Reignier of Corneto infested the maritime coast of Rome with robberies; and his namesake, of the noble Florentine family of the Pazzi, pursued the same occupation of murderous assaults on travellers.

CANTO XIII.

¹ The river Cecina falls into the Mediterranean some miles to the south of Leghorn. Corneto is a small town of the Patrimony of St. Peter, near the mouth of the river Marta. The marsh lands of the district between these points are interspersed with patches of forest, and abound in deer, wild goats, and boars. Such a country would afford facilities for the marauding exploits of the Reigniers, mentioned at the end of the preceding Canto.

² For a description of the Harpies, see Virgil's "*Æneid*," b. iii. The Strophades were two islets in the Ionian sea, south-east of Zacynthus, which are still known by the name Strophadia. The prophecy runs thus in Virgil:—

"You seek the Italian shores, foredoomed by fate:
The Italian shores are granted you to find,
And a safe passage to the port assigned;
But know that, ere yon promised walls you build,
My curses shall severely be fulfilled:
Fierce famine is your lot, for this misdeed
Reduced to grind the plates on which you feed."

Dryden's Trans.

² This is the original of the above line :—

“Io credo, ch'ei credette, ch'io credessi :”

and it is a specimen of the poet's mind too valuable to be diluted. Dante has often the air of a man too deeply engaged with things to concern himself about words. Like Shakspeare, his more ornamented passages are usually found in the pauses of his main action. See, in illustration of this, the whole of Canto xvii. Thus, in the “Merchant of Venice,” throughout the exquisite moonlight scene, Lorenzo and Jessica are waiting for the return of the principal characters. In “Troilus and Cressida,” the magnificent speech of Ulysses (written, one might imagine, when the poet was fresh from the study of Hooker's first book of “Ecclesiastical Polity”) is uttered when the action of the drama has hardly commenced.

⁴ The incident of the bleeding tree is taken from Virgil's “Æneid,” b. iii.

⁵ Piero delle Vigne (Petrus de Vineis) was of Capua, and chancellor to the Emperor Frederic II. of Germany. By the two keys the poet understands love and hatred. The abominable book, “De Tribus Impostoribus,” was ascribed, among others, to this Piero. Dr. Maclaine, however, the translator of Mosheim, has a learned note to show that no such work existed till many centuries after. (See his Eccl. Hist., cent. 13, part 1, c. 2, last note). Sismondi, in his “History of the Italian Republics,” has adopted the report that Pier delle Vigne had listened to monkish counsel, and promised to poison his master.

⁶ Envy. “Cæsar's hostel,” because the emperors of Germany affected to be the legitimate heirs of the Roman western empire ; whence the title, King of the Romans, given to the emperor elect.

⁷ I have ventured to employ the word *disabuse* in a sense different from its ordinary meaning, but not, I think, unwarranted by the etymology.

⁸ “For such a warped slip of wilderness

Ne'er issued from his blood.”—*Measure for Measure*.

⁹ This will remind the reader of Theodore and Honoria. (See Dryden's version of the tale).

¹⁰ Lano, said to have been a native of Sienna, who, having wasted his property, went to serve in the Siennese army, which marched to Arezzo in aid of the Florentines : and when on their return they fell into an ambush laid by the Aretines in Toppo,

although he might have escaped, preferred death by the enemy's hands, being rendered desperate from his losses.

¹¹ James of St. Andrea was a Paduan, and, like Lano, a spend-thrift.

¹² Florence, in her transition from Heathenism to Christianity, had exchanged her tutelary god for a saint—Mars for John the Baptist. Hence the spirit argues that she must be continually harassed by war. According to Villani, the statue alluded to was one of Mars on horseback, which was thrown from its place into the Arno at the destruction of the city by Totila, recovered from the bed of the river when Florence was rebuilt in 801, and mounted on a pedestal on the bank of the river, whence it was once more swept away by an inundation of the Arno in 1333. It was at the foot of this statue that Buondelmonte was slain, whose murder was the beginning of the sanguinary struggles between Guelphs and Ghibellines, in Florence.

¹³ I cannot find any mention of a siege or destruction of Florence by Attila; and Paulus Diaconus asserts that he never was in Tuscany. That he ravaged Lombardy, and took possession of Milan, is certain; and of the whole war, Gibbon, in a note, confesses that, though so famous, it is but imperfectly known.—*Decline and Fall*, c. 35.

¹⁴ The name of this suicide is not revealed.

CANTO XIV.

¹ As described by Lucan in the ninth book of the "Pharsalia," where he makes Cato address his soldiers thus:—

"Let those, who, glowing with their country's love,
Resolve with me these dreadful plains to prove,
Nor of return nor safety once debate,
But only dare to go, and leave the rest to fate.
Think not I mean the dangers to disguise,
Or hide them from the cheated vulgar's eyes.
Those, only those, shall in my fate partake
Who love the daring for the danger's sake.

* * * * *
Foremost, behold, I lead you to the toil;
My feet shall foremost print the dusty soil."

Rowe's Trans.

* None of the historians mention this circumstance. In a letter, professing to be addressed by Alexander to his tutor Aristotle, an account is given of the fall of certain luminous flakes, against which, however, the garments of his soldiers were defence sufficient.

* The Phlegræan plain extended from Cumæ to Mount Vesuvius. The Leborini campi (Terra di Lavoro) formed part of it. The sulphureous exhalations chiefly, but in part perhaps the contests of successive adventurers in early times, originated the fable of the battle between the Giants and Gods, fought on this spot. Some authorities give the name of Phlegræan Plain to a portion of Thessaly also.

* The expedition of seven Argive chiefs to restore Polynices, son of Œdipus, to his rights, is the subject of one of the seven plays of Æschylus yet extant, in which, as here, Capaneus is distinguished for his gigantic stature and reckless impiety. Sophocles also has noticed the presumption and overthrow of this chief. (See Appendix A.)

* The hot springs of Viterbo, in the Papal dominions, are said to have been much frequented formerly. Dante's allusion is probably to the use of the water for washing those women's clothes.

* So Virgil, *Æn.*, book iii. v. 104 :—

“The fruitful isle of Crete, well known to fame,
Sacred of old to Jove's imperial name,
In the mid Ocean lies, with large command,
And on its plains a hundred cities stand.
Another Ida rises there.”—*Dryden's Trans.*

So Juvenal, Sat. 13.

* The mythological account is, that Rhea, observing that her husband Saturn devoured his children, concealed Jupiter in the depths of the Cretan Ida, and caused the Corybantes to drown his cries with the noise of their cymbals.

* Dante has here adapted the prophetic image of Daniel to the idea of the four ages, and fixes his giant in Crete, probably because the golden age was counted from Saturn. He turns his back on Damiata in Egypt, his face towards Rome, as Lombardi supposes, either because time is measured by the sun's course from east to west, or because Rome is considered as the centre of the true religion, and Egypt the type of idolatry and heresy. But it may

be doubted whether the poet's intention were not rather to indicate the fountains of ancient and modern civilization.

* The foot of potter's clay is the age then current, unworthy of being named after any metal. So Juvenal, Sat. 13 :—

“ An age rolls on, more black than iron times—
An age so steeped in sin, so clogged with crimes,
That very Nature, jealous of her fame,
Refused to stamp it with a metal's name.”

Hodgson's Trans.

¹⁰ That Hate (Styx), Sorrow (Acheron), and Rage (Phlegethon), should combine to spread the lake of Lamentation (Cocytus), is, I believe, an original idea of Dante, and a finer arrangement of the four infernal waters has never been made.

CANTO XV.

¹ The Cadzand is nearly due north of Bruges. The dykes of Holland are well known.

² The Brenta waters the northern part of the Paduan territory, and falls into the Adriatic opposite Venice.

³ Chiarentana is the name of that portion of the Alps in which the Brenta rises.

⁴ Brunetto Latini was the preceptor of Dante, and possessed a considerable share of the learning most esteemed in that age. He has left two works behind him—one written at Florence, in Italian verse, called “The Tesoretto,” and another at Paris, in French prose, “The Tesoro,” in which are many notices of chronological and other sciences, but ill-arranged. Profligate as he must have been, the commentators say that Dante's surprise is expressed at not finding him lower in Hell, among the forgers, since, in his capacity of notary, Brunetto had been charged with falsifying certain documents.

⁵ Brunetto, among his other accomplishments, had practised astrology, and cast, as it appears, the horoscope of his pupil.

⁶ Fiesole is situated about three miles from Florence, on the summit of a small hill, the *macigna* of which had, according to the poet, furnished not only materials for the palaces and public buildings of Florence, but for the stony hearts of its population. The commonly-received tradition, that the people of Fiesole founded a new town on the banks of the Arno, has been disputed.

⁷ The proverb of Florentine blindness is said to have originated in the following circumstance:—The people of Florence had assisted the Pisans in conquering Majorca. On their return, the Pisans, in acknowledgment of this, offered the Florentines their choice, either of two beautiful gates of bronze, or two porphyry pillars. The Florentines chose the latter, not aware that they had been injured by fire and artfully coloured over by their neighbours, and erected them in front of the church of S. Giovanni Batista: while the bronze gates remained at Pisa to ornament the cathedral. Fæsulæ was originally a Roman colony, and Florence had become such, according to Florus, about the end of the first century.

⁸ For Beatrice. The "other text" is Farinata's prediction, which, in verse 94, he calls *arra*, "an earnest" of the future.

⁹ Lombardi, following the Vocab. della Crusca, explains this to mean, that Dante no more regards the whirl of Fortune's wheel than he would that of the villager's pickaxe.

¹⁰ Priscian, the famous grammarian, was of Cesarea, in Cappadocia. He taught at Constantinople about the time of the Emperor Justinian.

¹¹ Francis d'Accorso is better known by his Latinized name, Accursius. He held the chair of Professor of Law at Bologna, and is celebrated for his "Great Gloss," or the code of Justinian. Some have asserted that the son of the famed Accursius is here meant; but this is doubtful at least, for the younger Francis is said to have been alive in 1300.

¹² This is supposed to be Andrea de Mozzi, Bishop of Florence, whom Nicolas III. removed to the see of Vicenza, at the request of his own brother, who was scandalized at his dissolute conduct. Vicenza is situated on the river Bacchiglione. The Pope styles himself, "Servant of the servants of God."

¹³ See note on verse 30 of the present Canto.

¹⁴ On the first Sunday in Lent it was formerly the custom to run a foot-race on the plain of Verona, the prize of which was a green mantle.

CANTO XVI.

¹ Gualdrada was daughter to Messer Bellincione Berti, of the family of the Ravignani, who is honourably mentioned in Cantos

xv. and xvi. of the "Paradiso." The tale, therefore, of her father's offer, that the Emperor Otho IV. should kiss her, and her spirited reply, is as inconsistent with Dante's praise of him as it is with chronology.

² Tegghiaio Aldobrandi has been alluded to in Canto vi. He dissuaded the people of Florence from giving battle to the Siennese at Montaperti, and the most disastrous consequences followed their neglect of his counsels.

³ Jacopo Rusticucci was also mentioned in Canto vi. His wife is said to have rendered his home so uncomfortable to him, by her coldness, that he forsook her.

⁴ Virgil.

⁵ Guiglielmo Borsiere is affirmed by Boccaccio (Giorn. 1, Nov. 8) to have been a man of ready wit and address. He was of a good family in Florence, and spent much of his life in courts.

⁶ Tasso has a similar expression (Ger. Lib., c. 15, st. 38). The thought resembles Shakspeare's in Henry V., act 4, scene 3 :—

"Then will he strip his sleeve and show his scars,
And say, 'These wounds I had on Crispin's day.'
Old men forget: yet all shall be forgot,
But he'll remember, with advantages,
What feats he did that day."

⁷ From the source of the Po, in Monte Viso southward, there is no river which keeps its own proper channel to the Adriatic, until we come to Ravenna, near which the Acquacheta, or, as it is called below Forli, the Montone, falls into the sea.

⁸ Boccaccio reports that there had been an intention, on the part of the lords of that country, to build a castle in the neighbourhood of the waterfall. Daniello (and I think Lombardi prefers his opinion) considers it to apply to the scarcity of monks in the Abbey of San Benedetto, which was rich and capacious enough to shelter and maintain a much greater number. I dare not oppose the Italian commentators on such a point, but must confess that the passage struck me at first as bearing a very different meaning; the *una scesa* of v. 101, seeming opposed to the *mille* of the following line, and I had accordingly rendered it—

"Where room were ample for a thousand falls."

⁹ It seems doubtful here whether Dante meant the actual cord of the Franciscans (of which order he is said to have lived and died a Tertiary), or, metaphorically, the girding of the loins by

mortification. His hope of mastering the Panther, *i. e.*, appetite, would accord with either. The expositors agree in thinking that Virgil here cheats the monster Geryon with the hope of carrying the soul of some deceiver down to its place of torment.

CANTO XVII.

¹ The Nomad tribes of the East (among which the Turks were originally counted) have always been remarkable for their preference of shawls and turbans of bright and varied colours.

² The tale of Arachne is told by Ovid, *Metam.* vi. l. She was of Lydia, and challenged Pallas to a trial of skill on the loom. The goddess vanquished and changed her into a spider.

³ The Lion on a field Or is said to have been the armorial bearing of the Gianfigliacci, a noble family of Florence; the Goose was the device of the Ubbriachi, also of Florence; the Sow (*scrofa*) that of the Scrovigni, nobles of Padua. The last of these three seems the only one belonging to the degenerate era of *canting heraldry*, as it is termed, in which the arms and mottos are allusive to the family name. The heraldic reader will also observe, that in neither of the three is colour blazoned upon colour. The existence and practices of these noble money-lenders are a strong confirmation of the truth of some passages in the early Roman history relative to the patrician usurers.

⁴ The Vitaliano here spoken of is said to have been V. del Dente, also of Padua. The other expected associate of the two Florentines was Messer Giovanni Buiamonti, the most infamous usurer of those times.

⁵ For the tale of Phaeton, see Ovid, *Metam.*, book ii. :—

“ At once from life and from the chariot driven,
The ambitious boy fell thunderstruck from heaven :
The horses started with a sudden bound,
And flung the reins and chariot to the ground :
Their studded harness from their necks they broke,
Here fell a wheel, and there a silver spoke ;
Here were the beam and axle torn away,
And scattered o’er the earth the shining fragments lay.
The breathless Phaeton, with flaming hair,
Shot from the chariot like a falling star,

That in a summer's evening from the top
Of heaven drops down, or seems, at least, to drop."
Addison's Trans.

⁶ For the story of Icarus, see Ovid, *Metam.*, book viii. :—

“—When now the boy, whose childish thoughts aspire
To loftier aims, and make him ramble higher,
Grown wild and wanton, more emboldened, flies
Far from his guide, and soars among the skies.

The softening wax, that felt a nearer sun,
Dissolved apace, and soon began to run ;
The youth in vain his melting pinions shakes—
His feathers gone, no longer air he takes :
‘O Father, Father !’ as he strove to cry,
Down to the sea he tumbled from on high,
And found his fate ; yet still subsists by fame
Among those waters that retain his name.”

Croxall's Trans.

CANTO XVIII.

¹ Dante's annotators assume that, in choosing the *Bolgia*, or budget, for the shape of these trenches, he intended to indicate the desire of unlawful gain which usually stimulates the fraudulent ; and this idea is confirmed by the words of Pope Nicolas III. in the nineteenth Canto, v. 72.

² I cannot follow Lombardi here in translating *valli* as the plural of *vallo* (Latin vallum), “a mound,” rather than of *valle*, “a valley :” nor in the following lines can I adopt his reading, *rende figura*, in place of the common *rendon sicura*. (See Biagioli's sensible note. Ed. Par. 1818).

³ The bridge of the castle of St. Angelo is here meant. Lombardi understands by “the mount,” Monte Giardano, a small eminence near the bridge formed by the ruins of the ancient city. Its site is marked in the Rione Ponte, in Clarke's “Plan of Modern Rome,” published with the maps of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

⁴ From the manner in which Dante here speaks of the Romish jubilee, it may be gathered that he did not consider it an inven-

tion of Boniface VIII., but as a ceremony of the Church already established; since that Pope did not issue his epistolary mandate until the year 1300, the very year to which Dante has assigned his vision. But whether it was then first imagined or not, the Papal letter decreed that all who, in the hundredth year, or year of jubilee, should confess their sins, and visit, with sentiments of contrition and repentance, the Churches of St. Peter and St. Paul, at Rome, should obtain thereby the entire remission of their various offences. The period was changed afterwards to fifty, and still later to twenty-five years. (See Mosheim, Eccl. Hist., cent. 13, part 2, c. 4).

⁸ Nothing more is known of this wretch, except that he was the brother of his unhappy victim. The Marquis was Obizzo the Second, of Este, Lord of Ferrara.

⁹ *Sipa*, instead of *si*, the ordinary Italian "yes." Savena and Reno are two rivers of the Bolognese.

⁷ All the expositors here seem to have read *cerchie eterne*, though some explain it by "continuous;" others, by its common signification, "eternal." I should read, if I dared, *esterne*, "external."

⁸ The tale of Jason and the golden fleece is well known. Its gross inconsistencies, and the futility of the attempts made by later Greeks to find for it a historical basis, are happily exposed in Bishop Thirlwall's account of the Heroes and their age (Hist. of Greece, chap. v.), where he characterizes the Argonautic expedition as "an adventure incomprehensible in its design, astonishing in its execution, connected with no conceivable cause, and with no sensible effect." The deceit which Hypsipyle had practised was in saving her father Thoas, when the other Lemnian women destroyed their male relations. The ancient poets made Medea sufficiently revenge herself.

⁹ This man is supposed to have been a relation of the famous Castruccio, Lord of Lucca in Dante's time.

¹⁰ *Zucca*, properly "pumpkin."

¹¹ This is the Thais of Terence's comedy, "The Eunuch." The question is there put by Thraso, the braggart lover; but the reply is not from the courtesan's own lips, but from Gnatho, the parasite and go-between.

CANTO XIX.

¹ The peculiar punishment of these spirits is explained by their former habit of looking earnestly to earth for the gold and silver it contains, and, as it were, scorning heaven with their heels. (See Milton's portrait of Mammon, *Par. Lost*, book ii.)

² The ancient custom of the Church, both to immerse at baptism and to receive infants by that ordinance in public only on certain high festival days, as Easter and Whitsuntide, rendered the provision of such baptisteries necessary; that of San Giovanni Batista, in Florence, contained, according to Landino, four orifices of the kind here described, ranged round the font in the middle (?) of the church, which were not removed until the year 1576. A child at play had, as it appears, thrust its head into one of these, which, in order to extricate it, Dante had broken.

³ This is an allusion to a barbarous mode of capital punishment then in use, which was to dig a hole in the earth, fasten the criminal in it with his head downwards, and then, by filling up the hole with earth, to suffocate him. Such a practice was known in Italy by the name *propagginare*, from the method of raising vines, &c., by layers. It is natural to suppose that the mendicant priest was often recalled by the miserable victim for the sake of a few moments of life, while, with ear bent downwards, he should listen to his last confession.

⁴ Boniface VIII., who, previously to his election to the pontifical chair, was Benedetto Gaetani of Anagni, governed the Roman Church from A.D. 1294 to 1303; and therefore Nicolas, mistaking Dante for him, accuses some written prophecy of deceiving him. The intrigues of Boniface with Charles II. of Naples, to procure the resignation of his predecessor in the Papacy, Celestine V., were notorious.

⁵ "That having," *quell'aver*. Shakspeare uses the word in "As You Like It."

⁶ *La bella donna*. The Church, which he degraded by his avaricious practices.

⁷ Nicolas III., of the noble family of Orsini at Rome, whose emblem was the bear. This Pope, in 1278, refused to crown the celebrated Rodolph of Hapsburgh emperor, until he had acknowledged and confirmed by solemn treaty all the territorial pretensions of the Roman see. This agreement, to which all the Italian princes subject to the emperor were obliged to accede, was

no sooner concluded, than Nicolas reduced under his temporal dominion several territories in Italy which had formerly belonged to the empire, particularly Romagna and Bologna. Dante's Ghibelline prejudices are said to have influenced him in assigning to this adversary of the imperial ascendancy the place he here occupies.

⁸ Nicolas III. died in 1280; he had, therefore, been the uppermost tenant of his cell in Malebolge for twenty years; but between the death of Boniface VIII., in 1303, and that of Clement V., the "pastor from the west," barely eleven years intervened. This latter, raised to the Papedom through the machinations of his monarch, Philip the Fair of France, was Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bordeaux, and he first broke the charm of Papal thunderbolts, forged in Rome and launched from the Vatican, by removing his residence to Avignon. He was, as might have been expected, the mere creature of his patron, and the object of mingled hatred and contempt to the Italians.

⁹ After the death of Seleucus Philopator, B.C. 176, and the succession of Antiochus Epiphanes, Jason, brother of Onias, the Jewish high priest, bribed that monarch with a promise of tribute, to the amount of four hundred and forty talents of silver, to depose Onias and instal him in the priesthood. For an account of his corruption of the Jewish youth by heathen customs, see Maccabees, book ii., c. 4. He was supplanted by Menelaus in the same manner as he had himself removed his brother. Dante no doubt compared the "Hellenizing" of Jerusalem by Jason with the "Gallicizing" of the Papedom by Clement V.

¹⁰ It is agreed by all the expositors that the contest here alluded to arose from the failure of a matrimonial negotiation set on foot by Nicolas III. with Charles King of Sicily, the object of which was to advance one of the *Orsatti* mentioned in verse 71. They are divided on some other points of no great moment. The Sicilian monarch, Charles (of Anjou) contemptuously rejected the proposal, and suffered for his feudal haughtiness by being refused a senatorship of Rome, the vicariate of Tuscany, &c.

¹¹ This is a remarkable exposition by our poet of the seventeenth chapter of the Apocalypse; in which he has applied half of the prophetic imagery in an unfavourable, and half in a favourable sense, to his own Church of Rome. Some have held that the seven heads represented the seven virtues—three theological, fo

cardinal; others, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (Isa. ii. 1, 2). Lombardi, comparing a passage of the Purgatorio (Canto xxxii. vv. 98, &c.), more plausibly interprets them of the seven Romish sacraments. The ten horns all understand to mean the commandments.

¹² There seems to me an ambiguity in the original of this line, which I have preserved in the translation. The Pope is sometimes called the husband of the Church, but the context inclines me to understand it rather of the Church's own faithfulness to her heavenly Bridegroom.

¹³ "Before the end of the eighth century some apostolical scribe, perhaps the notorious Isidore, composed the decretals, and the donation of Constantine, the two magic pillars of the spiritual and temporal monarchy of the Popes. This memorable donation was introduced to the world by an epistle of Adrian I., who exhorts Charlemagne to imitate the liberality and revive the name of the great Constantine. According to the legend, the first of the Christian emperors was healed of the leprosy and purified in the waters of baptism by St. Silvester, the Roman bishop; and never was physician more gloriously recompensed. His royal proselyte withdrew from his seat and patrimony of St. Peter, declared his resolution of founding a new capital in the East, and resigned to the Popes the free and perpetual sovereignty of Rome, Italy, and the provinces of the west.....The emperors and the Romans were incapable of discerning a forgery that subverted their rights and freedom; and the only opposition proceeded from a Sabine monastery, which, in the beginning of the twelfth century disputed the truth and validity of the donation of Constantine." (*Gibbon, Dec. and Fall, c. xlix.*) Dante has adopted without questioning the tradition.

¹⁴ (See Appendix B.)

CANTO XX.

¹ Litanies, the processions of the Romish Church for solemn supplications: an adaptation apparently of the *supplicationes* of heathen Rome.

² *Qui vive la pietà, quand 'e ben morta.* Lombardi compares the 150th line of Canto xxxiii. *E cortesia fu lui esser villano.* According to Virgil, zeal for the insulted prerogative of the Deity

should here have stifled the emotions of natural compassion. (See Appendix B.)

² Amphiarans, son of Oicles, represented by Æschylus as the wisest and most temperate of the seven chiefs who undertook the siege of Thebes. Betrayed by his wife Eriphyle, for the bribe of a gold necklace, he was compelled to join Adrastus, and his fate is recorded by Statius, *Th.*, book vii. :—

——“ Whether Neptune bade old Ocean roar,
And dashed the briny foam from shore to shore,
Or Earth herself would warn, by these portents,
The seer or brother-kings of both events,
Lo ! she discloses wide her hollow womb.
(Night feared the stars, the stars the nether gloom),
The prophet and his coursers, while they strive
To pass, the yawning cleft ingulphs alive.”

Lewis Thebaid.

After his death divine honours were paid to him, and he had a celebrated temple and oracle at Oropus, on the Bœotian frontier towards Attica.

⁴ Tiresias was the father of Manto ; in name no doubt made familiar to most English readers by the beautiful invocation to light with which the third book of “*Paradise Lost*” opens. He plays an important part in the “*Œdipus Tyrannus*” of Sophocles.

⁵ The skill of Aruns is celebrated by Lucan, *Phars.*, book i. :—

“ The state thus threatened, by old custom taught,
For counsel to the Tuscan prophets sought ;
Of these the chief for learning famed and age,
Aruns by name, a venerable sage,
At Luma lived ; none better could descry
What bodes the lightning’s journey through the sky ;
Presaging veins and fibres well he knew,
And omens read aright, from every wing that flew.”

Rowe’s Trans.

⁶ The marbles of Carrara are well known.

⁷ Virgil’s account of Mantua, in the “*Æneid*,” is as follows :—

“ Ocnus was next, who led his native train
Of hardy warriors through the watery plain,
The son of Manto by the Tuscan stream
From whence the Mantuan town derives the name.

An ancient city, but of mixed descent,
 Three several tribes compose the government ;
 Four towns are under each ; but all obey
 The Mantuan laws, and own the Tuscan sway."

Dryden's Trans., b. x.

⁸ Manto fled from the tyranny of Creon. Bacchus was the tutelary god of Thebes, of which his mother, Semele, was a native.

⁹ Benacus, now Lago di Garda. The geography of the poet here has given rise to a great quantity of annotation and conjectural emendation. I have accepted Vellutello's reading Valdimonica, simply because I cannot understand why Val Camonica should be marked as a limit to the waters which form the lake Benacus, when it is completely separated from that basin by a mountain range, and its streams have a lake of their own ; and, it is worthy of note, that while Vellutello asserts that there is a Valdimonica in the Brescian territory, in Chauchard's Map there is a town named Moniga on the lake, exactly opposite Garda. It seems that more than one point in the Alpine range bore the name of Pennus or Penninus, which will not startle those modern etymologists who have learnt to connect the scattered but enduring memorials of a most ancient race, and think they find its vestiges as well in the Pennine and Apennine heights of Italy, as in the Cornish Pentyre and Pendennis, the Penmanmawr of Wales, or the Scottish Ben-Awe or Ben-Nevis.

¹⁰ The respective dioceses of Brescia, Verona, and Trent, met at a point on the shores of the lake ; and the poet's meaning is, that each bishop could give his pastoral benediction on that same spot by signing the cross.

¹¹ Peschiera is at the lower end of the Lago di Garda. The district of Brescia joins it, and next to the west is that of Bergamo.

¹² Governo, or Governolo, a fortress of the Mantuan territory.

¹³ According to ancient annalists, the Counts of Casalodi, a Brescian fortress, had seized the sovereign power in Mantua : upon which Pinamonte de' Buonacossi, a Mantuan noble, aware that his equals in rank were hated by the commons, induced Count Albert of Casalodi to shut up certain men of rank (whom Pinamonte judged the most likely to throw obstacles in his own way) ; and, having conciliated the popular favour, deprived Casalodi of the seignory, put to the sword the rest of the Mantuan nobility, burnt their houses, and banished for ever such as had escaped

with life. (See Muratori Ann. d' Italia all' anno 1269, and an old Mantuan history published by him in the 20th vol. of his *Rer. Italic. Script.*)

¹⁴ In the second "*Æneid*," v. 114, &c.:—

"Dismayed, and fearful of some dire event,
Eurypylus t' enquire their fate was sent;
He from the gods this dreadful answer brought:
O Grecians! when the Trojan shores ye sought,
Your passage with a virgin's blood was bought;
So must your safe return be bought again,
And Grecian blood once more atone the main."

¹⁵ "Sir Michael Scott, of Balwearie, flourished during the 13th century, and was one of the ambassadors sent to bring the maid of Norway to Scotland, upon the death of Alexander III. He was a man of much learning, chiefly acquired in foreign countries. He wrote a commentary upon Aristotle, printed at Venice in 1496; and several treatises upon natural philosophy, from which he appears to have been addicted to the abstruse studies of judicial astrology, alchemy, physiognomy, and chiromancy: hence he passed among his contemporaries for a skilful magician." (*Notes to the "Lay of the Last Minstrel*, canto ii., n. 11). Sir Walter quotes this passage from Dante. The "flank so spare" has been attributed by some to the appearance of the tight Scottish dress. Lockhart's "*Life of Scott*" contains a most happy application of Dante's lines to the great northern wizard of modern day himself, when in Italy.

¹⁶ Guido Bonatti, of Forli, in whose predictions Count Guido di Montefeltro put much confidence, wrote a work on astrology, which Daniello professes to have seen.

¹⁷ Asdenté was an illiterate cobbler of Parma.

¹⁸ The ancient tradition was, that Cain, and the thorns which he had offered for sacrifice, in derision of the earth's barrenness, produced by the Divine curse, were represented by the spots in the moon. Seville, if reduced to its prosaic truth, merely stands here for any point far to the west of Italy.

CANTO XXI.

¹ The city of Lucca was under the patronage of Santa Zita, and her magistrates bore the title of *Anziani*. The unnamed

victim, Buti thinks, was Martin Bottaio, who, with Bonturo dei Dati, divided the influence at Lucca in those days. They were rival in knavery as well as power; for Dante's exception of Bonturo here is the bitterest irony.

² *Tornò su convolto*. As no one, either in the Serchio or any other river, could swim bent double, nor was it likely that the sinner could hear the demons with his head under the pitch, I translate *su convolto* together, having no doubt that the fiends sneer at their victim, as well as at his superstition, in the words *qui non ha luogo il Santo Volto*. The *Holy Visage* was a supposed likeness of the Saviour taken by Nicodemus, which, after various adventures, was safely lodged in the Church of St. Martin, in Lucca. The Serchio flows near that city.

³ Caprona, a fortress on the Arno, was captured from the Pisans by the Lucchese, who leagued with the rest of the Guelphic party in Tuscany to make war on Pisa, as the head of the Ghibellines. The captors left their servants in charge of Caprona, who, being in turn besieged by a large Pisan army, and distressed for water, capitulated on condition of their lives being spared. On leaving the castle they were all tied together with a single rope, by order of Guy de Montefeltro, lest on straggling from their convoy they should be murdered by the peasantry. But as nothing could prevent the Pisan soldiers, through whose ranks they marched, from calling out *impicca, impicca* ("hang them"), they were naturally apprehensive of the infraction of their safe conduct.

⁴ There is considerable difficulty here, in whatever way we translate the Italian. On the one hand, the evangelists distinctly tell us that the earthquake happened at the very time of our Lord's death; and hence Lombardi argues that *quest'otta* must be understood of the *fourth* hour: to which Biagioli answers, I think justly, that it is incredible three whole hours had elapsed from their arrival on the bridge of the Fifth Pouch. I have therefore followed the majority of the commentators, and supposed the poet to speak of the moment of the crucifixion. It should be observed that Dante represents himself to have taken this journey, not on the Good Friday and Easter Eve of the year 1300, but on the days of that year which corresponded, by their proximity to the full moon, with those on which the actual death and burial of the Redeemer happened: 1266 years added to 34, the age assigned to our Lord by the poet elsewhere, make up the 1300.

³ These names of the demons are, some of them at least, significant; *Graffiacane*, for instance; but the attempts to explain them appear to me, on the whole, infelicitous.

CANTO XXII.

¹ Leonard Aretin, in his life of Dante, states that the poet was serving on horseback in the Florentine army at the battle of Campaldino, where the cavalry of Arezzo, having repulsed the Florentine horse, and pursuing them too rashly, occasioned the defeat of their own forces. Dante probably alludes to this particular conflict, as he apostrophizes the Aretines.

² This was one Giampolo, or Ciampolo. Theobald, King of Navarre.

³ After the downfall of the Roman empire in Italy, Sardinia was taken by the Saracens, from whom the Pisans recovered it during the period of their naval power in the Mediterranean. They divided the island into four prefectures, named respectively Logodoro, Callari (now Cagliari), Gallura, and Alboarea, and sent three persons, chosen from the principal Pisan families, as governors, who in time became sovereign lords of the territories committed to their charge. The Friar Gomita here spoken of seems to have ingratiated himself so far with one of these petty princes, Nino Visconti, as to have obtained the management of affairs in Gallura.

⁴ About the middle of the thirteenth century, Frederic II. reunited Sardinia to the German empire, and established his natural son Enzo as king, causing him to marry Adelasia, heiress of Logodoro. To this Enzo, Michel Zanche is said to have been seneschal; and after the death of the Emperor Frederic, when the imperial power again declined in Italy, Enzo being taken prisoner and dying in captivity at Bologna, the wily seneschal, by various arts and rogueries, obtained his master's widow in marriage, and became Lord of Logodoro.

CANTO XXIII.

¹ St. Francis, through an excessive humility, would not allow his friars to be called *Fratres*, but *Fraterculi*, or *Fratres Minores*.

² The fable is, that the frog offered his services to the rat to carry him over some water, and as he stopped in the middle, with intent to drown his companion, they were both of them seen and trussed up by a hawk.

³ *Mo* and *issa*, two old Tuscan words signifying "now."

⁴ Some say that the monks of Cologne were condemned to wear larger and clumsier cowls, to humble the ambitious vanity of one of their superiors, who had requested for them the privilege of wearing scarlet hoods, spurs, &c. But Biagioli well observes, that the satire of the poet was probably directed at the larger and coarser cowls, which indicated hypocrisy on the part of those monks.

⁵ Frederic II. is said to have punished criminals guilty of leze-majesty, by inclosing them in leaden shrouds, and thus committing them to the flames to be melted down with the metal.

⁶ The spirit compares their groans, from the burden of their cloaks, to the creaking noise of a pair of scales over-weighted.

⁷ These *Frati Godenti* were an order of ecclesiastical chivalry, instituted by Pope Urban IV. in Lombardy, and properly called *Frati di Santa Maria*; but, being permitted to live at home, to marry, and to enjoy other worldly privileges, they became distinguished by the above title from the more ascetic orders.

⁸ Paolino Pieri, in the 7th book and 13th chapter of his Chronicle, says—"In the year 1266, on the 1st of July, were elected two podestà, at one time, in Florence, to hold power for six months, and these were Frati Godenti, of Bologna: one, Messer Loderingo degli Andalò; the other, M. Napoleone Catalani." The former was chosen by the Ghibellines, the latter by the Guelphic party; but in a short time the gold of the Guelphs proved too tempting for them both: the Ghibellines, by their means, were expelled from Florence, and the palaces of the Uberti, chiefs of that side, which stood in the street of the citadel, were plundered and burnt.

⁹ Caiaphas, high priest of the Jews at the time of the crucifixion. About two years afterwards, Vitellius, then governor of Syria, deposed him from the priesthood, and he destroyed himself. Annas was his father-in-law. The confusion and irregularity of the high priesthood in those times were, of themselves, significant warnings, that the sacerdotal privilege of the house of Aaron was about to pass away from it, and they helped to prepare

the minds of serious and observing Israelites for Him who was to be "a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedec."

¹⁰ Bologna had a university, famous from the earliest times of the revival of literature; but I have no doubt Biagioli is right in connecting this with c. xvii. 58, 59, as a satirical touch of the poet.

CANTO XXIV.

The sun enters 'Aquarius about the 21st of January.

² The snow.

³ Biagioli supposes this "longer stair" to mean the hill of Purgatory.

⁴ Lucan, "Pharsalia," book ix. :—

"Slimy Chelyders the parched earth distain,
And trace a reeking furrow on the plain.
The spotted Cenchris, rich in various dyes,
Shoots in a line, and forth directly flies :

* * * * *

The Swimmer there the crystal stream pollutes,
And swift through air the flying Javelin shoots.

* * * * *

The Amphibæna doubly armed appears,
At either end a threatening head she rears :
Raised on his active tail the Pareas stands,
And as he passes furrows up the sands."

(See Milton, *Par. Lost*, book x.)

Rowe's Trans.

⁵ Alluding to the popular belief of the precious stone of this name having power to render the wearer invisible. (See Boccaccio's novel of "Calandrino.")

⁶ Messer Fuccio de 'Lazzezi of Pistoia, the illegitimacy of whose birth is signified by the term *Mulo*.

⁷ Dante expected to have found him among the irascible, or the violent, at lowest.

⁸ On Vanni della Nona, who, as a receiver of the stolen goods, seems to have deserved his fate, though not from his treacherous namesake.

⁹ The factions of Bianchi and Neri had their origin in Pistoia, from the divisions of the family Cancellieri there. In 1301, the

Bianchi of Pistoia, combining with those of Florence, expelled the Neri from the former place. Shortly after this, the fortunes of the two parties changed, and it became the turn of the Bianchi to leave Florence: and in the same year, Marcello dei Marchesi Malaspini, at the head of the expatriated Pistoian Neri, encountered the opposite faction in the Picenian district, and completely routed them. The Magra separates the Genoaese from the Florentine territory.

CANTO XXV.

¹ Most commentators suppose that this is in allusion to the dissolute soldiery of Catiline, who took refuge in Pistoia and its neighbourhood.

² Capaneus. (See Canto xiv.)

³ Maremma, the marsh-lands of Tuscany, on the sea-coast, abounding in serpents.

⁴ Virgil, "*Æneid*," book viii. :—

"See yon huge cavern, yawning wide around,
Where still the shattered mountain spreads the ground :
That spacious hold grim Cacus once possessed,
Tremendous fiend ! half human, half a beast :
Deep, deep as hell, the dismal dungeon lay,
Dark and impervious to the beams of day.
With copious laughter smoked the purple floor,
Pale heads hung horrid on the lefty door,
Dreadful to view ! and dropped with crimson gore."

Dryden's Trans.

⁵ Virgil, however, makes Hercules strangle him.

⁶ Cianfa, of the noble Florentine family of Donati. He and his companions here were probably embezzlers of the public funds.

⁷ Some of the expositors understand this of candlewicks made from the papyrus; others, as I have rendered it. Alfieri truly says, it makes little matter which we understand it.

⁸ Agnello, or Agnolo Brunelleschi, of Florence.

⁹ The black snake was Francesco Guercio Cavalante.

¹⁰ Lucan, "*Pharsalia*," book ix. :—

"But soon a fate more sad with new surprise
From the first object turns their wondering eyes."

Wretched Sabellus by a Seps was stung :
 Fixed on his leg with deadly teeth it hung.
 Sudden the soldier shook it from the wound,
 Transfixed and nailed it to the barren ground.

* * * *

The flesh and shrinking sinews backward flew,
 And left the naked bones exposed to view.
 The spreading poisons all the parts confound,
 And the whole body shrinks within the wound.

* * * *

Small relics of the mouldering mass were left,
 At once of substance as of form bereft ;
 Dissolved, the whole in liquid poison ran,
 And to a nauseous puddle shrunk the man.

* * * *

So snows dissolved by southern breezes run,
 So melts the wax before the noonday sun.
 Nor ends the wonder here ; though flames are known
 To waste the flesh, yet still they spare the bone :
 Here none were left, no least remains were seen,
 No marks to show that once the man had been.

* * * *

A fate of different kind Nasidius found—
 A burning Prester gave the deadly wound,
 And straight a sudden flame began to spread,
 And paint his visage with a glowing red.
 With swift expansion swells the bloated skin—
 Nought but an undistinguished mass is seen,
 While the fair human form lies lost within ;
 The puffy poison spreads and heaves around,
 Till all the man is in the monster drowned."

Rowe's Trans.

" Cadmus, changed with his wife into serpents. See Ovid,
Met., book iv. :—

" ' Come, my Harmonia, come, thy face recline
 Down to my face : still touch what still is mine.
 O let these hands, while hands, be gently pressed,
 While yet the serpent has not all possessed.'

More he had spoke, but strove to speak in vain—
 The forky tongue refused to tell his pain,
 And learned in hissings only to complain.
 Then shrieked Harmonia, 'Stay, my Cadmus, stay—
 Glide not in such a monstrous shape away !
 Destruction, like impetuous waves, rolls on.
 Where are thy feet, thy legs, thy shoulders, gone ?
 Changed is thy visage, changed is all thy frame—
 Cadmus is only Cadmus now in name.
 Ye Gods ! my Cadmus to himself restore,
 Or me like him transform—I ask no more.' ”

Eusden's Trans.

¹² Arethusa, metamorphosed to a fountain. Ovid. *Met.*, b. v. :—

“ The God so near, a chilly swcat possess'd
 My fainting limbs, at every pore express'd ;
 My strength distilled in drops, my hair in dew,
 My form was changed, and all my substance new :
 Each motion was a stream, and my whole frame
 Turned to a fount, which still preserves my name.”

Maynwaring's Trans.

¹³ Buoso degli Abati.

¹⁴ Puccio Sciancato, like the former, a citizen of Florence.

¹⁵ The Cavalcante above mentioned was murdered by the people of Gaville, a place situated in the vale of Arno, and his kinsmen, in revenge for his death, massacred the greater part of the towns-people ; whence Gaville is said to mourn for him.

CANTO XXVI.

¹ The five of the preceding Canto.

² Those dreams were held most certainly true which were dreamt the last before men awoke in the morning. (See Canto xxxiii. vv. 37, 38.)

³ Not only the enemies of Florence, but Prato, her neighbour and subject, would rejoice in her calamities. These were heaped heavily upon her in the year 1304, when a bridge over the Arno broke down with a multitude of people assembled on it to witness a public spectacle ; upwards of 1,700 houses were burnt, with

immense destruction of property consumed in them ; and the fury of the rival factions put the crowning stroke to the miseries of the city.

⁴ The prophet Elisha.

⁵ Statius, "Thebaid," book xii., v. 430, &c. :—

"Again behold the brothers ! When the fire
Pervades their limbs in many a curling spire,
The vast hill trembles, and the Intruder's corse
Is driven from the pile with sudden force.
The flames, dividing at the point, ascend,
And at each other adverse rays extend."

Lewis's Trans.

⁶ The partnership of Ulysses and Diomed in various stratagems is notorious. (See the tenth book of the "Iliad" throughout). The trick of the famous wooden horse, by means of which Troy was taken, opened a gate (metaphorically) for the voyage of Æneas to Italy and the foundation of Rome, according to poetic legends.

⁷ Deidamia was the daughter of Lycomedes, king of Scyros, and became mother of Neoptolemus or Pyrrhus, by Achilles. To obtain the co-operation of the son of Thetis, Ulysses proceeded to the Scyrian court disguised as a merchant. Achilles was detected by his choice of a suit of armour among the merchandize displayed, and quitted Scyros for Ilium, leaving Deidamia inconsolable.

⁸ Virgil puts the account of this theft into Sinon's mouth. "Æneid," book ii. :—

"Greece on Minerva's aid relied alone,
Since first the labours of the war begun.
But from that execrable point of time
When Ithacus, the first in every crime,
With Tydeus' impious son, the guards had slain,
And brought her image from the Phrygian fane,
Disdained her sacred wreaths with murderous hand
Still red and reeking from the slaughtered band—
Then ceased the triumphs of the Grecian train,
And their full tide of conquest sunk again."

Dryden's Trans.

⁹ Tacitus bears witness to the contempt of the Greeks for other nations ; which was no more than a natural consequence of captive Greece beholding her savage conqueror a disciple seated at her feet.

¹⁰ Homer, "Odyssey," book x. :—

"Her kind entreaty moved the general breast;
Tired with long toil, we willing sunk to rest.
We plied the banquet, and the bowl we crowned,
Till the full circle of the year came round."

Pope's Trans.

¹¹ The place was Monte Circeo, or Circello. Caieta (now Gaeta) was named, according to Virgil, from the nurse of Æneas. ("Æneid," book vii.)

¹² Majorca, Minorca, &c.

¹³ The Pillars of Hercules—Abyla on the African, Calpe (Gibraltar) on the European mainland; long esteemed impassable by the Greeks—a notion which the adventurous Phenicians were likely to encourage. Hercules, it should be observed, was a Tyrian deity, and two characteristics at least connect him with Samson, that terror of the Philistines.

¹⁴ Ceuta, in Latin times Septa, on the African coast.

¹⁵ The light invests the under side of the moon, as that which is next the earth.

CANTO XXVII.

¹ The tale of the brazen bull, constructed by Perillus of Athens for Phalaris, tyrant of Agrigentum, to which the artist himself was condemned the first, is familiar to most readers of classical story.

² The town of Montefeltro lies between Urbino and that part of the Apennine range which gives rise to the Tiber.

³ The armorial cognizance of the family of Polenta was Per pale on a field Azure and Or, an Eagle displayed Argent and Gules. Cervia, a town twelve miles south from Ravenna, on the shore of the Adriatic.

⁴ Forli, which stood a long siege by an army composed principally of French, and sent under the command of M. de Pau, and was relieved by Guy di Montefeltro in person about the middle of May, A.D. 1282.

⁵ Sinibaldo Ordelaffi, tyrant of Forli, bore (if I understand Venturi's heraldry correctly) Barry of six, Vert and Or, on a chief Or a lion Vert.

⁶ The Malateste, father and son, tyrants of Rimini, to whom belonged the fortress of Verrucchio, near that place.

⁷ Montagna di Parcisati was a noble of Rimini, head of the Ghibellines.

⁸ The cities of Faenza and Imola are situated on the banks of the rivers Lamone and Santerno respectively. They were ruled at this time by Machinardo or Maynard de' Pagani, whose family device was Argent a lion's whelp Azure. He wavered between the two great factions.

⁹ Cesena is the city here alluded to.

¹⁰ Count Guy of Montefeltro here relates his own story.

¹¹ The Cordeliers were the brethren of the order of St. Francis; so called from the rope with which they were girdled.

¹² Pope Boniface VIII.

¹³ The Colonna family, the most influential then in Rome, was the object of the Pope's implacable and persevering resentment.

¹⁴ Acre fell finally into the hands of the infidels in the year 1292, two years before the elevation of Boniface to the Papal chair.

¹⁵ Though it is now generally agreed by the learned, that the Emperor Constantine deferred his baptism till the close of his life. A.D. 337, and then received that rite from the hands of Eusebius, Bishop of Nicomedia, Dante here follows the Popish tradition of his times, which alleges that Constantine, being at Rome in the year 324, was warned, by a vision of St. Peter and St. Paul, to fetch Sylvester, bishop of that city, from his retreat in the caverns of Soracte, and that in gratitude for his cure he amply endowed the Roman Church. (See note on Canto xix., v. 115).

¹⁶ Guido had taken refuge in the convent of Assisi.

¹⁷ Palestrina (the ancient Præneste) was the sole remaining stronghold of the Colonnas, and they had assembled therein all their partisans.

¹⁸ Celestine V., whom Boniface had persuaded to resign.

¹⁹ Deceived by the professions of the Pope, the Cardinals Jacopo and Piero Colonna submitted to him, and put their castle into his hands, which he soon demolished, and built the new Palestrina in the valley. The final issue of these artifices is remarkable. "As the Pope resided at Anagni, without suspicion of danger, his palace and person were assaulted by three hundred horse, who had been secretly levied by William of Nogaret, a French minister,

and Sciarra Colonna, of a noble but hostile family of Rome. The cardinals fled, the inhabitants of Anagni were seduced from their allegiance and gratitude; but the dauntless Boniface, unarmed and alone, seated himself in his chair, and awaited, like the conscript fathers of old, the swords of the Gauls. Nogaret, a foreign adversary, was content to execute the orders of his master; by the domestic enmity of Colonna, he was insulted with words and blows; and during a confinement of three days his life was threatened by the hardships which they inflicted on the obstinacy which they provoked. Their strange delay gave time and courage to the adherents of the Church, who rescued him from sacrilegious violence; but his imperious soul was wounded in a vital part, and Boniface expired at Rome in a frenzy of rage and revenge.”—*Gibbon, Dec. and Fall, c. lxix.*

²⁰ “*Che, scommettendo, acquistan carco.*” I do not hesitate to adopt Lombardi’s ingenious explanation of this involved thought. A load is usually amassed by putting things together, but the burden of schismatics is heaped by the opposite method, by dividing things before conjoined.

CANTO XXVIII.

¹ Apulia was the scene of several destructive conflicts in the course of its reduction under the Roman power. It witnessed at Cannæ a sanguinary vengeance taken for its ancient wrongs. Livy mentions two reports concerning the equestrian rings sent by Hannibal, one of which states them at three modii and a half, the other (preferred by the historian) at a modius.

² See Gibbon, Dec. and Fall, c. lvi., for an account of the eventful history of Robert Guiscard and his conquest of Calabria and Apulia.

³ Ceperano is a small place on the borders of the Campagna di Roma, near Mount Casino. It was here, say the commentators, that the Apulians forsook Manfred, or Mainfroy, son of Frederic II. and King of Naples, who subsequently lost “his kingdom and his life in the bloody battle of Benevento,” fought against Charles of Anjou.

⁴ In the year 1268, Conrad of Suabia, nephew of Mainfroy, renewed the struggle against Charles, and entered the Abruzzo

with a formidable force. They met on the 23rd of August, at Tagliacozza, in that country, and Charles was advised by Alardo di Valeri, an old French knight of great experience, to reserve five hundred horse to watch the issue of the conflict. His French and Provençal troops were routed, and he was with difficulty withheld from the scene of action, till, at the moment when the enemy's forces were completely disordered by their eagerness in pursuit, the aged warrior exclaimed, "Now, Sire, is your time; the victory is ours;" and the cavaliers, putting spurs to their horses, charged the broken ranks of the enemy, and entirely changed the fortune of the day. Conrad escaped to the sea-shore, but was recognized, conveyed to Naples, and there publicly beheaded in the October following.

⁵ Ali was the personal friend of Mahomet, and the fourth in succession to the caliphate. He appears to have been little deserving the odium which Dante has here affixed to his name, although his adherents doubtless produced, by their violent partisanship, the political, rather than theological, schism between the Shutes and Sonnites, which "is still maintained in the immortal hatred of the Persians and Turks." (*Gibbon, Dec. and Fall, c. i.*) A valuable addition has lately been made to Gibbon's brief notice of the Fatemite party and their attempts, by Dr. Nicholson, who has translated an extract from an ancient Arabic MS. in the Ducal Library of Saxe Gotha, recording the establishment of the Fatemite dynasty in Africa, and enriched it with a learned introduction and notes.

⁶ The Friar Dulcinus succeeded Gerard Sagarelli, as head of the sect called *Apostles*. He "published his predictions with more courage, and maintained them with more zeal, than his predecessor had done, and did not hesitate to declare, that in a short time Pope Boniface VIII., the corrupt priests, and the licentious monks, were to perish by the hand of the Emperor Frederic III.He was opposed by Raynerius, Bishop of Vercelli;and after several battles, fought with obstinate courage, was at length taken prisoner and put to death at Vercelli, in the most barbarous manner, in 1307, together with Margaret, whom he had chosen for his spiritual sister, according to the custom of his sect." (*Mosheim, Eccl. Hist., cent. 13, part 2, c. v., and the note*). Novara is in Piedmont.

⁷ Vercelli, capital of a lordship of the same name, is in Piedmont.

Marais was anciently a fortress at the mouth of the Po, near Porto Prinsipa.

⁹ *Fior di Medicina*, so called from a place of that name in the country of Bologna, was a fermenter of discords among the Bolognese, and provoked the enmity between Guy of Palatka, Lord of Ravenna, and the younger Malatesta, of Rimini.

¹⁰ *Fano*, a city on the shore of the Adriatic, nine miles south of Pesaro.

¹¹ Guido del Camere and Angiolillo da Cagnano repaired to *La Cattolica*, a castle on the sea-shore between Rimini and Pesaro, by request of Malatestina, tyrant of Rimini, who pretended that he wished to consult with them, but had secretly persuaded the crew of their vessel to throw them overboard.

¹² That is, through the whole extent of the Mediterranean.

¹³ This is, in the original, an intricate sentence. The person who would have been glad never to have seen Rimini is Curio.

¹⁴ *Focara* was a high promontory near the *Catholica*, which, occasioning frequent sudden squalls, and consequently risk to the vessels coasting near it, caused the mariners to offer prayers for their escape as they passed.

¹⁵ *Lucan*, "*Pharsalia*," book i. :—

"To Cesar's camp the busy Curio fled :

Curio, a speaker turbulent and bold,

Of vernal eloquence, that served for gold,

And principles that might be bought and sold.

A tribune once himself, in loud debate

He strove for public freedom, and the state ;

Essay'd to make the warring nobles bow,

And bring the potent party-leaders low.

To Cesar thus, while thousand cares infest,

Revolving round the warrior's anxious breast,

His speech the ready orator address'd.

• • • • •

'The unready faction, yet confused with fear,

Defenceless, weak, and unresolv'd appear.

Haste, then, thy towering eagles on their way—

When fair occasion calls, 'tis fatal to delay.' "

Rome's Trans.

¹⁶ Buondelmonte di Buondelmonti had mortally offended the powerful house of the Amedei, by promising to wed a lady of

their family, and afterwards uniting himself to one of the Donati. The affronted Amedei met to consider in what manner they should attempt to revenge themselves; and while they were hesitating, Mosca dei Lamberti exclaimed, "*Cosa fatta ha capo,*" meaning, say the Italian expositors, that, once achieved, the thing would adjust itself. Accordingly, with the aid of some of the younger among his party, Mosca assassinated Buondelmonte, and kindled the first spark of that feud, which afterwards blazed so fiercely between Guelphs and Ghibellines, in Florence.

¹⁴ A controversy of some importance has been raised on this passage, in which M. de Guinguene proposes to read *al Re Giovane* for the received *al Re Giovanni*. The name of *Rey Jovens* was given to Henry, eldest son of Henry II. of England, in consequence of his being crowned in his father's lifetime. And certainly, at the time when Bertrand de Born appears to have exercised most influence over the minds of Henry's children, John, his favourite, was too young to enter into the family disputes. On the other hand, it is certain that the defection of Prince John afterwards was the crowning blow which broke his father's heart. On the whole, as Sig. Biagioli's arguments appear to me too slight to overthrow the mass of probabilities on the other side, and as there are certainly lines in Dante quite as unmusical as that which it is proposed to read here—

"Che diedi al Re Giovane i ma' conforti,"

I have adopted Guinguene's alteration. (See Appendix C.)

CANTO XXIX.

¹ This Geri del Bello the commentators all agree to have been brother to Cione Alighieri, Dante's cousin. He was a man of bad character, and, as his place denotes, a make-bate. He was murdered by one of the Sacchetti family.

² *Altaforte, rocca in Inghilterra*, says Landino, and following him Lombardi: *Altaforte in Guascogna*, says Biagioli. Haute-forte lies a little to the east of Perigueux in the (ancient) province of Guienne.

³ Landino says that his murder was avenged about thirty years afterwards by a son of the Cione above-mentioned, who slew one of the Sacchetti in his own doorway.

¹ The valley of the Chiana, between Arezzò, Cortona, Chiùsi, and Montepulciano. Maremma, the coast between Pisa and Sienna already spoken of.

² Ovid's *Metamorph.*, book vii. :—

“ But now the plague, grown to a larger size,
Riots on man, and scorns a meaner prize.
Intestine heats begin the civil war,
And flushings first the latent flame declare,
And breath inspired, which seemed like fiery air.
Their black dry tongues are swelled, and scarce can move,
And short thick sighs from panting lungs are drove.
They gape for air, with flattering hopes t' abate
Their raging flames ; but that augments their heat.
No bed, no covering can the wretches bear,
But on the ground, exposed to open air,
They lie, and hope to find a pleasing coolness there.
The suffering earth, with that oppression curst,
Returns the heat which they imparted first.”

Stonestreet's Trans.

³ This man's name was Griffolino ; and Albero, or Alberto di Sienna, disappointed in the manner here related, complained to his relative, the Bishop of Sienna, who burnt Griffolino for a sorcerer. Dædalus made wings for himself and his son Icarus to escape the vengeance of Minos.

⁷ With irony similar to that by which Bonturo is called the only exception to the knavery of the Lucchese (Canto xxi., v. 40), Dante here signalizes the vainest of the vain in Sienna.

⁸ This Stricca is said to have been *un Curiale* di Siena.

⁹ Niccolo, by some surnamed de Bonsignori, by others de Salimbeni, whose genius was exercised in gastronomy, and produced the invention of stuffing pheasants with cloves. The “ garden ” of this second Apicius is here Sienna.

¹⁰ It is said that in the time of Dante a number of Siennese youths formed a society, converted all their estates and possessions into ready money, and in the short space of twenty months, having squandered in extravagant entertainments their common stock, to the amount of two hundred thousand ducats, brought themselves to beggary : among these Caccia di Asciano and L'Abbagliato (for I prefer that reading to Lombardi's) seem to have been the most wealthy.

¹ This Capocchio is supposed to have been Dante's fellow-student in youth, and to have devoted himself first to alchemy ; but proving unsuccessful in his aim, to have turned his attention to counterfeiting the precious metals.

CANTO XXX.

¹ Semele, beloved of Jupiter, was daughter of Cadmus, the founder of Thebes, and persuaded by Juno in disguise to demand of her lover that he would visit her arrayed in his celestial glories, she perished by the lightnings with which he was surrounded. Her child was rescued from the destruction of the mother, and received the name of Bacchus.

² Ovid, *Metam.*, book iv. 513 :—

“ Now Athamas cries out, his reason fled,
 ‘ Here, fellow-hunters, let the toils be spread ;
 I saw a lioness in quest of food,
 With her two young, run roaring in this wood.’
 Again the fancied savages were seen
 As through his palace still he chased his queen,
 Then tore Learchus from her breast : the child
 Stretched little arms, and on its father smiled—
 A father now no more, who now begun
 Around his head to whirl his giddy son,
 And, quite insensible to nature's call,
 The helpless infant flung against the wall.”

Eusden's Trans.

³ Ino and her son Melicerta became sea-deities, under the names of Leucothoe and Palemon. Ovid describes her despair :—

“ The same mad poison in the mother wrought :
 Young Melicerta in her arms she caught,
 And with disordered tresses howling flies—
 ‘ O Bacchus, Evoe Bacchus !’ loud she cries.
 The name of Bacchus Juno laughed to hear,
 And said, ‘ Thy foster-god has cost thee dear.’”—*Ibid.* 1

⁴ Virgil, *Æn.*, book ii. :—

“ Then Pyrrhus thus : ‘ Go thou from me to fate,
 And to my father my foul deeds relate :

New die :¹ with that he dragged the trembling sire
 Shuddering through clobbered blood and holy mire
 (The mingled paste his murdered son had made),
 Hauled from beneath the violated shade,
 And on the sacred pile the royal victim laid.
 His right hand held his bloody falchion bare,
 His left he twisted in his hoary hair :
 Then with a speeding thrust his heart he found,
 The lukewarm blood came rushing through the wound,
 And sanguine streams distained the sacred ground.
 Thus Priam fell, and shared one common fate
 With Troy in ashes, and his ruined state."

Dryden's Trans.

² Ovid, *Metam.*, book xiii. 705 :—

"The Thracians, fired at this inhuman scene,
 With darts and stones assail the frantic queen.
 She snarls and growls, ner in a human tone,
 Then bites impatient at the bounding stone.
 Extends her jaws, as she her voice would raise
 To keen invectives in her wonted phrase,
 But barks, and thence the yelping brute betrays."

Stanyan's Trans.

³ Gianni Schicchi, said to be of the Cavalcanti of Florence, was endowed with singular powers of mimicry, and on the death of Buoso Donati concealed himself in the same bed with the corpse, and deceived the notary whom he had caused to be summoned to the bed-side, by dictating in the voice of the deceased a will in favour of Simon Donati. It is added, that the best-mare in Simon's stud was the price of this villany.

⁴ Myrrha's horrible story is told by Ovid, among others.

⁵ Maestro Adamo was a native of Brescia, and prevailed on by the Counts of Romena to produce a spurious coinage of gold florins—a coin which at Florence bore on the obverse the head of St. John the Baptist, on the reverse a lily. "The whole monetary system of Europe was at this period abandoned to the depredations of sovereigns, who continually varied the title and weight of coins, sometimes to defraud their creditors, at other times to force their debtors to pay more than they had received, or the tax-payers more than was due. During a hundred and fifty years

more, the kings of France violated their faith with the public, making annually, with the utmost effrontery, some important change in the coins. But the republic of Florence, in the year 1252, coined its golden florins of twenty-four carats fine, and of the weight of one drachm. It placed the value under the guarantee of publicity and of commercial good faith; and that coin remained unaltered, as the standard for all other values, as long as the republic itself endured."—*Sismondi*.

⁹ The hills of Casentino lie near the source of the Arno.

¹⁰ Fonte Branda, a copious fountain in Sienna.

¹¹ The wife of Potiphar.

¹² The capture of Sinon is the subject of a picture by Claude, in the National Gallery, and is thus described in Virgil ("Æneid," book ii.) :—

"Meantime with shouts the Trojan shepherds bring
A captive Greek in bands before the king,
Taken, to take, who made himself their prey,
To impose on their belief, and Troy betray.
Fixed on his aim, and obstinately bent
To die undaunted, or to circumvent.

* * * *

Now hear how well the Greeks, their wiles disguised,
Behold a nation in a man comprised."

Dryden's Trans.

The catastrophe is produced by the success of Sinon's fabricated story, and on the same night Troy falls.

¹³ Narcissus became enamoured of his own image reflected in a fountain. His "mirror," therefore, is fresh water.

CANTO XXXI.

! Achilles, at the siege of Troy, bore the spear of his father Peleus, and having wounded with it Telephus, King of Mysia, was induced by Ulysses to grant a portion of the rust which had gathered on the lance's point to heal the wound.

² The famous defeat of Charlemagne at Roncesvalles, where he is said to have lost 30,000 men, and many of his Paladins, among the rest Roland (Orlando), warden of the March of Brittany. Turpin writes that Orlando's horn was heard eight miles off by

Charlemagne. It is not, however, historically true that the king himself, "with all his peerage, fell by Fontarabia;" but this disaster, through Gano's treachery, was a serious check to his holy crusade against the Moors.

² Montereaggio, a castle in the Siennese.

⁴ The large bronze pine-apple which had originally ornamented the Mole of Hadrian, was placed afterwards on the top of the Campanile of St. Peter at Rome, whence it was thrown down by lightning, and after having remained some time on the steps of that church, was removed to its present situation, in the private garden of the Pope, at the side of the grand corridor of the Belvedere.

⁵ Dante distinguishes the people of Friesland as very tall.

⁶ I have ventured to accent the last word of this line differently from the original, for the sake of the rhyme—a pardonable liberty, I trust, as the verse is not rendered at all more intelligible by it. Virgil's address to Nimrod may be considered as accompanied with action suitable to make the monster understand him: the words certainly would not. He is represented as still affected by the confusion of Babel.

⁷ Ephialtes is mentioned with his brother Othus by Virgil, "*Æneid*," book vii. :—

"Here lie the Aloean twins (I saw them both),
Enormous bodies, of gigantic growth;
Who dared in fight the Thunderer to defy,
Affect his heaven, and force him from the sky."

Dryden's Trans.

⁸ Briareus, the hundred-handed.

⁹ The combat of Antæus and Hercules is described by Lucan, "*Pharsalia*," book iv. :—

"The teeming earth, for ever fresh and young,
Yet, after many a giant son, was strong;
When labouring here with the prodigious birth,
She brought her youngest born, Antæus, forth.
Of all the dreadful brood which erst she bore,
In none the fruitful beldame gloried more:
Happy for those above she brought him not
Till after Phlegra's doubtful field was fought."

Rowe's Trans.

After a description of the wrestling and death of Antæus, which is too long to extract, the poet continues :—

“ Thus fond of tales, our ancestors of old
The story to their children's children told ;
From thence a title to the land they gave,
And called this hollow rock Antæus' cave :
But greater deeds this rising mountain grace,
And Scipio's name ennobles much the place,
While, fixing here his famous camp, he calls
Fierce Hannibal from Rome's devoted walls.”

Rowe's Trans.

¹⁰ Tityus and Typhoeus, well-known names among the giants. The former is made by Virgil the prey of a vulture perpetually devouring his liver. (“Æneid,” book vi.)

¹¹ The Garisenda (as it is more generally called in modern days) is still one of the most striking objects in Bologna. There are said to remain 130 feet of its height ; but as its leaning neighbour, the Torre d'Asinelli, is 350 feet high, part of the Garisenda may have fallen since Dante's time, or the inclination of the other tower from the perpendicular have taken place at a later period, unless we suppose the poet to have chosen the lower of the two purposely, as a nearer match with the stature he assigns to Antæus.

CANTO XXXII.

¹ The nine Muses. Amphion was son of Jupiter, by Antiope.

² Tanais, now the Don, falls into the sea of Azov.

³ Tabernicch, or Tambernich, a lofty mountain of Slavonia.

⁴ Pietrapana (Petra Apuana), a mountain of considerable elevation near Lucca.

⁵ Alberto degli Alberti and his sons possessed a large domain in the vale of the Bisenzio, which, rising in the mountains of Vernio, on the confines of the Bolognese, and flowing past the town of Prato, joins the Arno a little above the bridge of Signa. The names of the two sons were Alessandro and Napoleone, and they ended a career of tyranny and cruelty by mutual fratricide.

⁶ Caina, from Cain, the first murderer.

⁷ Merdrec, or Mordred, nephew of King Arthur, who, rebelling against his uncle, and allying himself with the Saxons, Scots, and Picts, was encountered by Arthur in the field of Camlan, in Corn-

wall, where they both fell. The "double breach" alludes to the incident, found in the romances, that Arthur ran Mordred with his lance through the body, and caused the light to pass through. The memory of Arthur's exploits is so clouded over by fable, that, with Milton, some have disputed his very existence.

⁸ Focaccia de Cancellieri, a noble of Pistoia, cut off the hand of a cousin, and murdered an uncle; from which crimes, according to Gio. Villani, the factions of the Bianchi and Neri first arose in Pistoia.

⁹ Sassol Mascheroni is also said to have assassinated his own uncle.

¹⁰ Alberto Camicione de Pazzi of Valdarno treacherously slew his relative, Ubertino. Carlino de Pazzi, being of the Bianchi faction, traitorously surrendered the castle of Piano di Trevighe to the Florentine Neri for a bribe.

¹¹ Antenora, named from the Trojan Antenor, who is accused of having sold his country to the Greeks.

¹² This is Bocca degli Abati, by whose treason four thousand Guelphs were destroyed at Mont 'Aperti. (See note on Canto x., v. 32). Bocca supposes Dante to be a disembodied spirit like himself.

¹³ Buoso da Duera, of Cremona, is accused by Malaspina, in his chronicle, of having taken a bribe from the commander of the French forces, Guy de Montfort, in the year 1265, to allow the troops of Charles of Anjou unmolested passage through the defiles of the Parmesan, on their march to the conquest of Naples, to prevent which Buoso had been stationed there by Manfred, with a chosen body of soldiers.

¹⁴ This is said to have been an abbot of Vallombrosa, a Pavian by birth, who, being Papal Legate in Florence when it was in the power of the Guelphs, and intriguing to betray it to the Ghibellines, was discovered in the midst of his plots, and publicly beheaded. Some commentators have called him a native of Parma, but the poet seems to make him of Florentine extraction.

¹⁵ Giovanni Soldanieri deserted his party, and devoted himself to the interests of the Guelphic faction in Florence, who rewarded his apostasy by raising him to the chief place among them.

¹⁶ Ganellon, or Gano, of Mayence, celebrated in romance as the traitor whose disloyalty caused the rout of Charlemagne at Roncesvalles.

¹⁷ Tribaldello de' Manfredi, commandant in Faenza, betrayed that town, in 1281, to the combined troops of Pope Martin IV. and Charles of Naples, whose object was to exterminate the Ghibellines from Romagna.

¹⁸ Tydeus, son of Ceneus, King of Calydon, and father of Diomed, slew Menalippus at the siege of Thebes, and was himself mortally wounded. The fact here alluded to is told by Statius, *Theb.*, book viii.

CANTO XXXIII.

¹ In the year 1285 the sovereignty of Pisa was disputed by three competitors, two of the Guelphs, Nino, judge of Gallura in Sardinia, and Count Ugolino de' Gherardesci, his maternal grandfather; and one of the Ghibellines, Ruggieri degli Ubaldini, Archbishop of Pisa. The last-mentioned of these prevailed on Ugolino to expel his grandson and make himself master of Pisa; and when he had thus taken advantage of the divisions in the Guelphic party, in the year 1288, he succeeded in exciting the populace of Pisa against Ugolino by a charge of meditated treason: a tumultuous mob, led on by the chiefs of the Pisan nobility, Gualandi, Siamondi, and Lanfranchi, tore Ugolino, with four of his family, two sons and two nephews, from his palace, and hurried them to prison. This was done in August. In the following March the citizens caused the doors of the tower in the Piazza degli Anziani, where they were confined, to be locked, and the keys thrown into the Arno, that no one might convey food to the prisoners any longer; and eight days after this, the tower being forced open, Ugolino and the four youths were found dead, carried out with their fetters still about their legs, and buried at S. Francesco, in a tomb, from which Buti afterwards saw their irons taken out. The hills which screens Lucca from Pisa is Monte S. Giuliano.

² It has been argued that the word *chiavare* should here be rendered *to nail up*, as the doors would have been locked, as a matter of course, during the whole of the Count's imprisonment. But the historical account (see the preceding note) bears out the common interpretation; and even supposing that the principal door of the tower had been daily locked, yet to hear it closed at the time when Ugolino might naturally expect it to be opened to admit their food,

would flash upon his mind at once as a proof of their intended destruction by famine.

² *Si*, the Italian "yes."

⁴ Capraia and Gorgona are two small islands on the Tuscan coast—the former a little to the north-east of Corsica, the latter a few leagues higher up. They are selected probably as nearest the mouth of the Arno.

⁵ *Novella Tebe*, from the horrible cruelties practised in it. Ugucione and Brigata, the two victims hitherto unnamed by the poet.

⁶ Alberigo dei Manfredi, one of the Joyous Brotherhood. (See note on Canto xxiii., v. 103). He affected to become reconciled to some of his associates with whom he was at feud, invited them to his house, and at the conclusion of a sumptuous entertainment, ordered *the fruit* to be brought, at which preconcerted signal a band of his retainers rushed in and massacred the guests.

⁷ *Tolommea* receives its name from that Ptolemy of Egypt who caused Pompey the Great, when after the battle of Pharsalia he had taken refuge in Egypt, to be treacherously murdered.

⁸ *Atropos*, the Fate to whom is committed the office of cutting off that vital thread which her two sisters spin.

⁹ Branca d'Oria, of the celebrated family of that name, in Genoa, slew his father-in-law, Michel Zanche, to gain possession of his judicatory of Logodoro, in Sardinia. (See Canto xxii., v. 88).

CANTO XXXIV.

¹ The first line of this Canto is in Latin, and a parody on the opening of a hymn sung in the Romish Church, at vespers, during the Passion-week—

"Vexilla regis prodeunt."

² Lucifer, the brightest of the morning stars, say the Fathers, until he forfeited his place. Milton has imitated his predecessor here:—

"He above the rest,
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tower. His form had not yet lost
All her original brightness, nor appeared

Less than archangel ruined, and the excess
Of glory obscured : as when the sun new risen
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams."—*Paradise Lost*, b. i.

³ Different explanations are given of Satan's threefold aspect. The more ancient commentators understood this to indicate various passions—the scarlet, anger ; the yellow, avarice or envy ; the black, slothfulness. Lombardi, and after him Biagioli, interprets these colours of the European, Asiatic, and African complexion ; sinners being assembled from every climate hither. I confess I do not like this geographical conceit : Milton, at least, knew nothing of it when he described his Satan, while apostrophizing the sun—

"Thrice changed with pale, ire, envy, and despair."

Nor would there be anything appropriate in the position of the two Romans, of which the poet is careful to apprize us.

⁴ In order to understand this intricate passage, we must remember that the poet had a tolerably correct idea of the centre of gravity, and therefore, as soon as Virgil, sliding down the hairy ices of the infernal monarch, has reached that point, his toil of climbing upwards to the soles of Lucifer's feet commences.

⁵ Dante, ignorant of the continent of America, which was destined one day, by its discovery, to reward Italian genius, courage, and perseverance, supposes the great mass of dry land to have fled affrighted from the shock of Satan's fall ; and that as he sank to the middle of earth, a similar terror drove the ground nearest his feet upward, to form the mount of Purgatory, leaving that void space in which the travellers found themselves as they quitted their strange ladder.

APPENDIX A.

In eodem illo Sophoclis carmine ad quod provocavi de Capaneo fulmine cœlitus percusso, sc. Antigonæ, v. 100, et sqq., hodie legitur vocabulum pluribus vv. dd. suspectum quidem, sed a namine, quod miror, extrusum; videsis tamen, candide lector, an prorsus ejiciendum sit.

A versu 110 ejus dramatis incipit systema Anapæsticum :—

“ὅς ἐφ’ ἀμετέρα γὰ Πολυνείκους
ἀρθεῖς νεικέων ἐξ ἀμφιλόγων,
ὄξέα κλάζων,
ἀιετὸς εἰς γὰν ὥς ὑπερέπτα,
λευκῆς χιόνος πτέρυγι στεφανός,
πολλῶν μεθ’ ὄπλων
ξύν θ’ ἱπποκόμοις κορὴθεσσι.”

Huic (a versu 127 ad v. 133) respondet Antisystema :—

“Ζεὺς γὰρ μεγάλῃς γλώσσης κόμπους
ὑπερεχθαίρει· καὶ σφας ἐσιδὼν
πολλῷ ρεύματι προσνισσομένους
χρυσοῦ καναχῆς * ὑπεροπτίας *
παλτιῷ ρίπτει πυρὶ βαλβίδων
ἐπ’ ἄκρων ἥδη
νίκην ὀρμῶντ’ ἀλαλάξαι.”

Pro *ὑπεροπτίας*, Brunckius *χ’ ὑπεροπλίαις*, mutato *καναχῆς* in *καναχῆ*. Hermannus *ὑπερόπτας* ex manu corrigentis MS. La. recepit, cæteris non mutatis. Wunderus *ὑπεροπτοτέρους* e conjectura profert. Sed importunum illud *ὑπεροπτίας*, ni multum fallor, incuriæ debetur librarii repetentis, ex antecedente systemate, et id confuse, verba ὥς *ὑπερέπτα*, ex quibus *ὑπεροπτίας* quis non videt facillime conflare posse? Hoc igitur expulso, totum antisystema in hunc modum refigatur.

“Ζεὺς γὰρ μεγάλης γλώσσης κόμπους
 ὑπερεχθαίρει· καὶ σφας ἐνιδῶν
 πολλῷ ῥεύματι
 χρυσοῦ καναχῆς προσηυσομένους,
 παλτῷ ῥίπτει πυρὶ βαλβίδων
 ἐπ’ ἄκρων ἤδη
 νίκην ὀρμῶντ’ ἀλαλάξαι.”

quæ si placuerit cum versibus systematis conferre, forsitan hanc mutationem levissimam fateberis haud minus numerorum venustati quam sensui verborum subvenire.

APPENDIX B.

Biagioli indulges in a rather sneering note at Lombardi's explanation of this passage. I should not have ventured to oppose, on a point of grammar, a learned Italian Professor, were it not in defence of one to whom the lovers of the great poet must always feel themselves indebted. But the repetition of the adverb strikes me as a peculiar beauty; and when Sig. Biagioli asserted that Dante would have written *in* or *ne*, instead of *per*, he must surely have forgotten that *per* had been well explained in Lombardi's note as "on account of:" a sense it constantly takes. Biagioli's own interpretation seems to me very harsh and forced. It would give *soavemente* in the former line a different meaning from *soave* in the latter, and produce a sort of pun. The students of Dante do not always, I hope, approach him without a previous knowledge of grammar; but some, at least, among them will think other qualities necessary for understanding poetry; and the English lovers of the great Florentine, I am sure, will be disposed to doubt the fitness of one, who professes himself a devoted admirer of Voltaire, to expound the mind of Dante (see Biagioli's Introductory Notice, p. 6). This commentator's inclination for such verbal triflings as the above is amusingly exemplified in a note on Canto xx., v. 28.

After giving the true meaning in Alfieri's note, Sig. Biagioli

adds, "Non voglio però lasciar di riferir un' altra interpretazione la quale, se non è la vera, mi si perdonerà in grazia dell' amor del vero, per il quale solo mi muovo. L'ordine diretto delle parole del testo si è : *la pietà vive quì, quando la pietà è quì ben morta.* Ora pigliandosi la voce pietà della prima proposizione, nel senso che pur le è proprio, di *devozione o affetto alle cose di religione*, franc piété, e nella seconda proposizione, in quello di *compassione*, vorrebbe dire che il non aver per coloro nessuna compassione e un vero esser *pìo*, poichè coll'aver sì fatto sentimento per coloro, che dalla divina Giustizia puniti sono, è in certo modo un disapprovare il giudizio di Dio, ch'è la maggior scelleratezza che possa far l'uomo, ed essendo questo il sentimento dei due sequenti versi, ognun per se vede ch'esso più s'accorda con questa nuova interpretazione." New indeed !

APPENDIX C.

The following spirited narrative of an interview between the insulted king and his rebellious vassal is from the "Pictorial History of England :"—

"The heart of the king was divided between grief at the death of his first-born, and rage against the insurgents, whom he held to have been not only the cause of his son's decease, but the impediment which had prevented him from seeing and embracing him in his last moments. The feeling of revenge, however, allying itself with the sense of his immediate interests, soon obtained entire mastery, and he proceeded with all his old vigour and activity against the barons of Aquitaine and Poictou. The very day after his son's funeral he took Limoges by assault ; then castle after castle was stormed and utterly destroyed ; and at last Bertrand de Born, the soul of the conspiracy, the seducer of his children, fell into his hands. Never had enemy been more persevering, insidious, and dangerous ; never had vassal so outraged his liege lord, or in such a variety of ways ; for Bertrand, like Luke de Barré, was a poet as well as knight, and had cruelly satirized Henry in productions which were popular wherever the

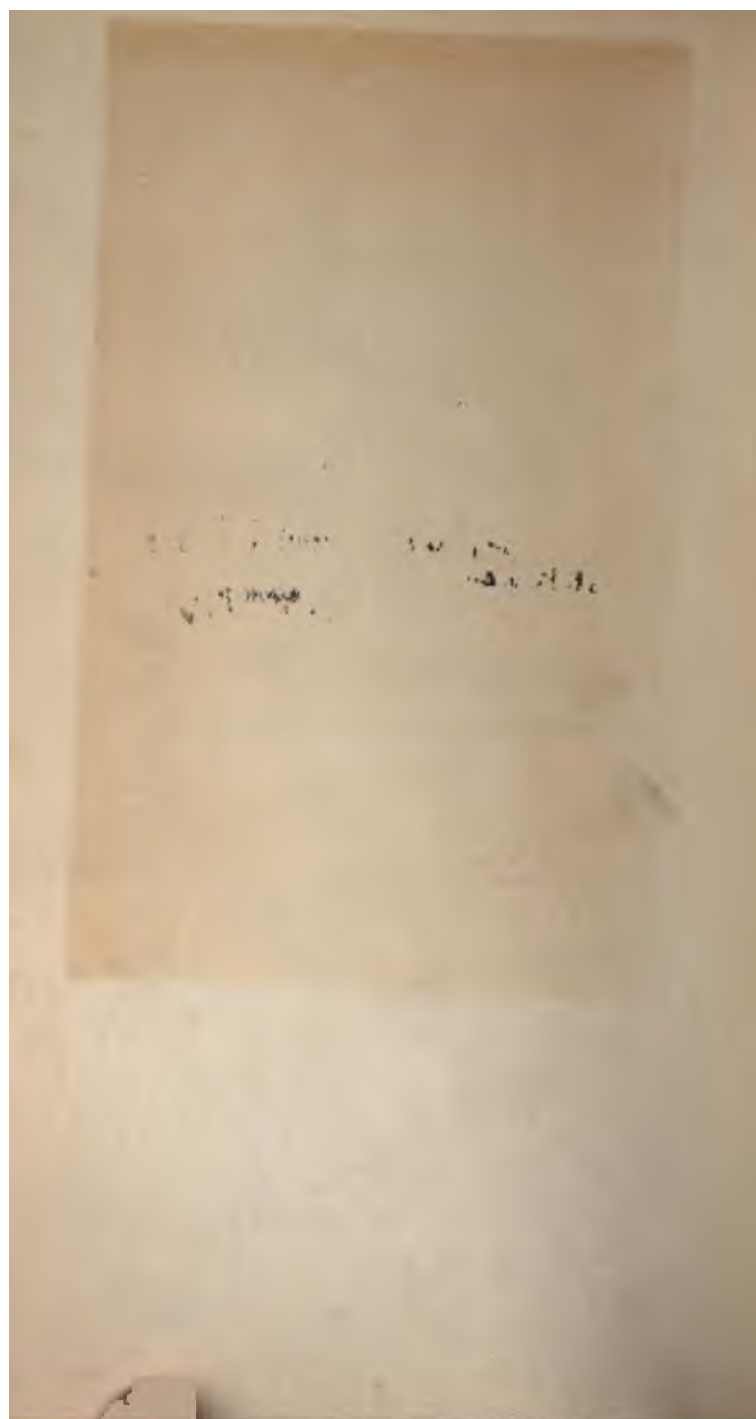
langue d'Oc was understood. All men said he must surely die, and Henry said so himself. The troubadour was brought into his presence to hear his sentence: the king taunted him with a boast he had been accustomed to make—namely, that he had so much wit in reserve, as never to have occasion to use one half of it, and told him he was now in a plight in which the whole of his wit would not serve him. The troubadour acknowledged he had made the boast, and that not without truth and reason. ‘And I,’ said the king, ‘I think thou hast lost thy wits.’ ‘Yes, sire,’ replied Bertrand, mournfully, ‘I lost them that day the valiant young king died; then, indeed, I lost my wits, my senses, and all wisdom.’ At this allusion to his son, the king burst into tears, and nearly swooned. When he came to himself his vengeance had departed from him. ‘Sir Bertrand,’ said he, ‘Sir Bertrand, thou mightest well lose thy wits because of my son, for he loved thee more than any man upon earth; and I, for love of him, give thee thy life, thy property, thy castle.’” (Book iii. c. i.) Now it is by no means likely that Dante, who was an admirer of Bertrand de Born’s genius, could have been ignorant of this circumstance; and surely if, after this (which it must have been if at all), Bertrand seduced John as he had young Henry, the poet would have placed him in Giudecca rather. Neither does the epithet *Re* well apply to John here: to his brother Henry it is most apposite; nor, again, can Bertrand well say with respect to John—

“I’feci ’l padre e’l figlio in se ribelli;”

for Henry II. did not survive John’s ingratitude, while his conflicts in the field with the “younger king” are notorious.

ERRATUM

Canto III.—Page 14, line 13, for "well-read," read "well-ared."



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